Enhancing Knowledge and Conceptions of Educators Supporting A Rapidly Growing English Learner Population

by

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Abstract

This dissertation begins by examining certain underlying causes and factors impacting the performance of English Learners (ELs) in a Mid-Atlantic urban district through a comprehensive review of the literature. This analysis employs the PELP Coherence Framework, specifically arranging the underlying causes and factors by environment and framework components. A needs assessment follows, examining the background of educators and the impact of that background on their cultural and linguistic knowledge as well as their beliefs and preconceived notions about the inclusion of ELs. A potential intervention to address this discrepancy in performance will explore the instructional core and various factors that can support the interaction between an educator and EL through considerations of the sociocultural perspective and ultimately considering a transformative professional learning experience as a potential intervention. The three main findings of this study are: (1) participants experienced changes in their knowledge and misconceptions; (2) participants were more reflective about their beliefs after participation in the series; and, (3) participants felt the collaborative, diverse nature of study contributed to the effectiveness.

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The student has made all necessary revisions, and we have read, and approve this dissertation for submission to the Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree.

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Dedication

To my father, Herand Ohanian, who is the hardest worker I know and taught me the value of education and commitment.

To my mother, Renee Ohanian, who taught me to problem solve for myself and not accept things at face value.

To my husband, Thomas (Tom) Wheeler, whose support, help, and encouragement gave me the time to do this work and keeps me motivated.

To my sweet son, Narek (Nar) Wheeler, who is the best distraction and motivator a person can have.

I dedicate this dissertation to the four of you.

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To my Mom and Dad who sacrificed so much so my brother and I could be raised in a country that affords me the opportunity to pursue my passion and dreams. My Dad who encouraged me constantly and never let me give up. My Mom who regularly checked in on me and made sure I was progressing. My brother, Ara Ohanian, and his family who brought me immense joy and support. My friend, Emma Ndour, who loved and cared for my young son when I could not. My small family – my husband and young son – who bring me love, support, and happiness every day. Tom, please know I realize how blessed I am to have a husband who may not pursue the same paths but supports me fully. For all the days and nights, you made dinner, took Narek (little Nar) out to play, or ran an errand so I could "work on my dissertation." Thank you!

I love you all and feel so lucky to have amazing family and friends in my life.

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Chapter 1 – Understanding the POP

Introduction

English Learners (ELs) are students who communicate in a language other than English or whose families use a language other than English at home and subsequently require English language instruction (Programs for Non-English and Limited-English Proficient Students, 2016). Researchers (e.g., de Jong & Harper, 2005; Meidl & Meidl, 2011; Reeves, 2009) suggest many educators do not have the linguistic and cultural knowledge necessary to implement effective instructional programming for ELs. These students are culturally and linguistically different from their educators (DaSilva Iddings, & Katz, 2007; Hos, 2016; McCloud, 2015), and some educators have lower expectations for linguistically and culturally diverse students as compared to their peers (Garza & Garza, 2010; Reeves, 2006; Terrill & Mark, 2000; Youngs & Youngs, 2001).

Problem of Practice

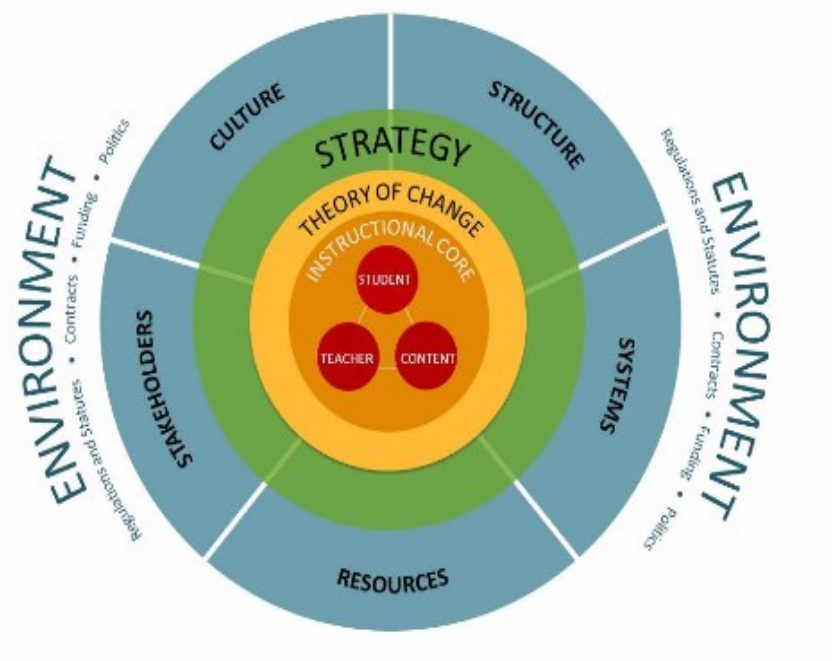
An evaluation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment reflects a discrepancy in performance for ELs and non-ELs, with non-ELs outperforming ELs in reading by an average of 37 points in fourth grade and 45 points in eighth grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). This discrepancy in performance remained consistent in mathematics with non-ELs outscoring ELs an average of 40 points in fourth grade and 38 points in eighth grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). This gap in test scores or test score performance in performance has remained relatively unchanged for the last 20 years, even though the proportion of the population identified as ELs has more than doubled in both 4th and 8th grades (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Within the state, the majority of ELs performed below basic or basic on the NAEP reading and math assessments and performed below basic at a rate that is twice that or more of other student populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). In this district, ELs showed proficiency in only two specific assessments which are third and fourth grade PARCC math assessment, both at a rate that is half their peers (Anonymous, 2017). The population of ELs in this state and district is rapidly increasing. However there have not been sufficient improvements in performance on national, state, and local assessments. Therefore, this student population may require specific linguistic and cultural supports (Sehlaoui & Shinge, 2013). The problem being investigated appears to be a lack of readiness to service this unique population, which is being exacerbated by its rapid growth. This problem will be analyzed through the lens of the Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) Coherence Framework.

PELP Coherence Framework

The PELP Coherence Framework is designed to support leaders in recognizing the interconnectedness of key components of their district when implementing reform efforts or changes (Childress et al., 2007). Childress et al. (2007) describe the framework and the interdependence of the components, which is represented in Figure 1. At the center of the framework is the **instructional core**, which shows the three critical components of instruction, "*teachers'* knowledge and skill, *students'* engagement in their learning, and academically challenging *content*" (Childress et al., 2007, p. 3). Encircling the instructional core is the **theory of change**, which should capture the district's core beliefs about how educators will improve the instructional core and drive the decision making of the organization (Childress & Marietta, 2008). For example, if the district believes effective instructional leadership is the key to improving student outcomes, the efforts of the district will focus on developing the competency of the instructional leaders within their organization. Surrounding the theory of change is the **strategy**, which articulates the specific efforts a district will and, more importantly, will not execute to implement the theory of change effectively (Childress et al., 2007). In our example of building instructional leadership, the professional development provided to school leaders will be designed to develop effective strategies for supporting teachers and staff in improving the instructional core; not, for example, focused on operational enhancements unless those will improve instructional leadership and instruction in the classroom.

Figure 1

PELP Coherence Framework



PELP Coherence Framework outlines how the components of the framework impact the Instructional Core. (Harvard University, 2017).

The two external components of the framework are the elements and operating environment. In Figure 1, the framework elements are identified as **culture**, **structure**, **systems**, **resources**, and **stakeholders**. As Childress et al. (2007) explain, the culture can appear to be intangible to some leadership members, but it is the agreed upon "norms and behaviors" (p. 6). This critical component of the framework requires deliberate efforts for leadership to address. An example might be to address school leaders who do not believe they can change instructional practices in their school, by helping them understand how they can become change agents, which would be critical to implementing the district strategy. Structure and systems are identified to capture both the formal and informal structures in a school system that drive decision-making

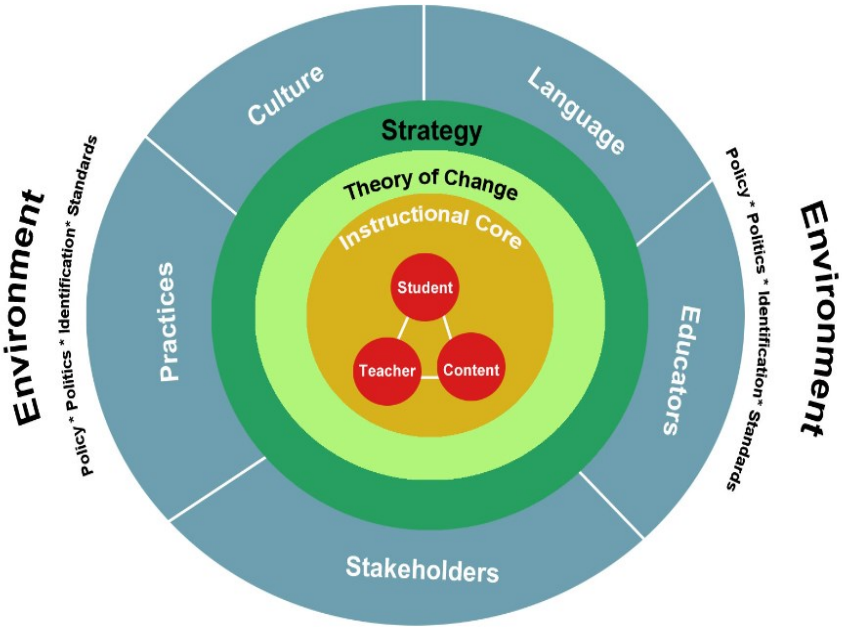
and implementation (Childress et al., 2007). It is critical that the appropriate staff receive the necessary support and professional development to support classroom practice, which can include department chairs, instructional coaches, and other teacher leaders. The funds, human capital, and technology are identified as specific portions of resources and need to be considered in decision-making (Childress et al., 2007). Stakeholders include the school and district staff. However, it is essential to include students, families, and specific community organizations and associations that can impact instruction either positively or negatively. This can include unions if they are active in promoting or opposing district initiatives. The district's **environment** is a critical component of the framework that is out of the control of district leadership but informs systemic change and decision-making (Childress et al., 2007). This includes the **regulations**, **statutes**, **contracts**, **funding**, and **politics** that impact educational practice in that district (Childress et al., 2007). In our example about instructional leadership, this could be the teachers' or administrators' union contract and the evaluation requirements outlined by this agreement. The PELP Coherence Framework will be used to understand the underlying causes and factors impacting the performance of ELs and develop an adapted framework for the purposes of analyzing this problem.

Underlying Causes and Factors

The PELP Coherence Framework provides a comprehensive system to approach systemic change and decision making for district leadership. For this dissertation, it will serve as a theoretical framework to determine the impact of underlying causes and factors affecting instruction of ELs. Specifically, due to the problem being situated in a large urban district. Figure 2 represents an adaptation of the PELP Coherence Framework for application in this literature review (Childress et al., 2007). This adaptation has been developed to focus on the instructional core with the student being an EL, centered on the engagement and language development of that population in this district. The factors creating the **environment** include **policy**, **politics**, **identification**, and **standards**. They surround the system and guide the policies, legal requirements, and resources available to support ELs. In this adaptation, the framework elements are organized as **language**, **culture**, **practices**, **educators**, and **stakeholders**. These framework elements and environmental factors together establish the underlying causes and factors that impact the instructional core. Precisely, these causes and factors include: the impact on an educator's expertise in supporting Els; engagement; and access to appropriately challenging content in an inclusionary setting.

Figure 2

Adapted PELP Coherence Framework



Adapted PELP Coherence Framework is an adaptation of the PELP Coherence Framework. (Harvard University, 2017).

Synthesis of Literature

Utilizing the adapted PELP Coherence Framework, an evaluation of the research will be conducted to examine this problem of practice. This includes an evaluation of the environmental factors and framework elements.

Environmental Factors

In the next two sections, the factors impacting the educational environment of an EL will be described and explored. This begins with the policies, court decisions, and politics that have evolved and drive the education policies currently governing the education of ELs. This section ends with an exploration of population growth, funding, and the development of the WIDA Standards that govern identification and assessment of ELs.

Educational Policy, Language Politics, and the Court System

The instruction of ELs is governed by the legal precedents and policies that impact resourcing and practices. The views about immigrants and non-Native speakers within society guide and may impact the development of specific education policies affecting the programming. In Laboratories for Inequality: State Experimentation and Education Access for English-Language Learners, Sullivan (2014) presents a thorough historical review of the laws, court cases, and policies that have led to the current education policies dictating the instruction of ELs, with consideration for the impact of immigration and societal beliefs. At the beginning of our nation, our first colonial schools made English language instruction a priority, still recognizing multilingualism in some cases and providing bilingual instruction in languages like German (Kaestle, 1983). Simultaneously, the Founding Fathers supported the linguistic diversity of their constituents. Indeed, the many important federal documents, like the Constitution itself, were translated into other languages (Sullivan, 2014). The government's support of immigration and

simultaneous language instruction in schools continued until 1917 when restrictions on immigration were implemented (Sullivan, 2014). The Immigration Act of 1917 mandated a literacy test for immigrants, in any language, and limited specific populations of immigrants (Bromberg, 2014). These restrictions continued, and by the 1960s the population in the United States was more linguistically uniform than it had been since the mid-19th century (Sullivan, 2014).

The trend toward linguistic conformity in education and policy shifted again in the late 1960s, with the influx of Cuban refugees (Hamann & Reeves, 2013). A focus on bilingual education resurfaced to ensure these immigrants could return at the end of Castro's regime, resulting in federal programs reinforcing bilingual education (Hamann & Reeves, 2013; Mackey & Beebe, 1977). The development of bilingual education policy was driven by the desire for students and families potentially to return to their native country (Mackey & Beebe, 1977). During the latter part of the 20th century, there was an influx of immigrants throughout the United States, accompanied by a continued debate about language instruction and the support of ELs.

In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act (BEA), Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, established an opportunity for federal funding of intermediate bilingual programming to support ELs (Menken, 2010). Just six years later, the landmark *Lau v. Nichols* decision, based on the "equal protections under the law" promised by the 14th Amendment and *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*, mandated school districts "identify students who were ELs [English Learners] and to make special accommodations for their instruction" (Hamann & Reeves, 2013, p. 82). This case was brought by the parents of Chinese immigrants against a California distrcit concerning the policy to provide language support, and the associated funding,

only between the ages 3 and 8. Congress complemented the *Lau* decision with the Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA) requiring states to address language needs of ELs (Sullivan, 2014). After years of immigration, and an influx of culturally and linguistically diverse students, legislation requiring schools to address the needs of ELs specifically was adopted.

In 1981, *Castañeda v. Pickard* involved a case filed against a school district in Texas by the father of two Mexican-American students claiming the children were being discriminated against based on how they were grouped. The results established three specific conditions for supporting ELs under the direction of Lau (Ovando, 2003). Thereafter, programming for ELs was required to be based on sound educational theory, effectively implemented, and evaluated (Fitzgerald, 1993). *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) was a case based on a group of families from Mexico who brought suit against another district in Texas that implemented tuition requirements for undocumented students in response to state law allowing schools to deny enrollment of undocumented students. This case's ruling guaranteed education to all children, regardless of their immigration status (Sullivan, 2014), allowing undocumented students the opportunity to enroll in school and be educated. In 1983 the release of *A Nation at Risk* kick-started the need for reform, an effort controlled largely by the general belief that a proper education can solve social and economic issues (Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Mehta, 2013). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Civil Rights Restoration Act and Civil Rights Enforcement Policy again highlighted the requirement of high-quality educational services to ELs (Hamann & Reeves, 2013).

In 2001 the adoption of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act required "annual progress as measured on standardized tests of both English language proficiency and academic content" (Menken, 2010, p. 121). For the first-time, states with Title III of NCLB Act were held accountable for the performance of ELs to improve English language proficiency annually

(Capps et al., 2005). However, though specifically identifying progress indicators, in New York City the result was an increase in the EL dropout rate by around 8% (21% to 29%) within a year of this graduation mandate taking effect (Menken, 2010). Menken (2010) explains ELs "are more likely to receive instruction that focuses on test preparation in the form of rote memorization and drills, at the expense of teaching methods proven effective in meeting the needs of this student population" (p. 126). This disconnect was also seen in Arizona, a state focused on English instruction and traditionally against any bilingual support in classrooms, which passed a requirement in 2006 for one year of Structured English Immersion (SEI) program for ELs in lieu of any other type of instruction support or bilingual programming (Lawton, 2012). SEI, which was also adopted by California, Arizona, and Massachusetts, was designed rapidly to support ELs in language acquisition (Clark, 2009). California saw a similar impact to classrooms with the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998, eliminating bilingual education from California schools, except in special situations or during a one-year sheltered immersion program (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001; Collier & Auerbach, 2011). The SEI programs specifically identified educational programming with time limitations and ultimately impacted the educational progress for ELs (Lawton, 2012). These programs and testing requirements created arbitrary goals or program lengths that did not consider language proficiency and student readiness (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001). This remained the situation in California even eight years after Proposition 227 was revoked in 2006 (Collier & Auerbach, 2011, Matas & Rodriguez, 2014).

Every Student Success Act (ESSA) signed in 2015 continues to monitor performance and progress of ELs, and it increases a state's accountability for ELs including requiring reporting on such populations as long-term, dual-identified and exited ELs (Lindahl, 2015). It will also

require states to identify specific entry and exit criteria for ELs (Parsi, 2016), though the ultimate impact of ESSA will be actualized in how states choose to adopt and interpret those requirements.

As a nation, the views about citizens and immigrants, including refugees, has driven key legislation that identifies programming for ELs. Though improvement has been made, much of the legislation driving minimum mandatory services does not effectively acknowledge or foster the actual levels and types of support necessary for ELs (August & Hakuta, 1997; Hamann & Reeves, 2013). August and Hakuta (1997) assert concern "by extent to which politics has constrained the development of sound practice and research in this field" (p.359). This progression of legislation has not resulted in academic success for this rapidly growing population (McFarland et al, 2017; Aud et al., 2013).

WIDA, Nomenclature, and Standards

In the previous section, I defined the policies and legislation that have established the instructional environment for the education of ELs. In this section, I will begin by defining an EL, then explain their assessments, and identify the standards that govern their instruction. As previously explained, the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) defines an EL as a student who communicates in a language other than English or whose families use a language other than English at home and subsequently require English language instruction (Programs for Non-English and Limited-English Proficient Students, 2016). Until this year, ELs were referred to as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, a term that focuses on the deficit in English rather than their prior knowledge of other languages (Garca, 2009). Some would argue both EL and LEP work from a mono-linguistic lens, discrediting the benefits and development of bilingualism, recommending Emergent Bilingual (EB) as a more appropriate term (Garca, 2009).

EB could be considered inaccurate as some ELs speak more than one language before they are exposed to English. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) utilize the term English Learner (ESSA of 2015, 2016; Cook, 2016). English learner (EL) is also less precise, as their development and instruction are focused on language. However, EL is the adopted terminology that is utilized in this Mid-Atlantic urban district and will be employed in this dissertation. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers are the educators that support ELs, and ESOL programming is the support provided to the students. The instruction provided to ELs is English Language Development (ELD). Though in this district ESOL is used to describe both programming and instruction.

As mentioned in the definition, an EL is not only a student who speaks another language but who also requires ELD. Historically, the identification of this service, specifically ESOL programming in this context, has been challenging with different entry and exit criteria throughout the nation (de Jong, 2004; Ragan & Lesaux, 2006). Maryland is part of the WIDA Consortium, which is an association of 36 states that have unified ELD standards and utilize the same entry, annual, and exit assessment (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). The entry assessment is the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT), which is a 20-80-minute assessment given by the ESOL teacher to determine if a student is eligible for ESOL service and defined as an EL (ESOL Department, 2016; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). A review of the student record triggers this assessment to determine if he/she or family members speak a language other than English (ESOL Department, 2016). The exit assessment, the ACCESS 2.0 for ELs, is given yearly to all ELs in the WIDA Consortium and consequently in the state of Maryland (ESOL Department, 2016; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). Both assessments measure students in the four language domains: listening, reading,

speaking, and writing aligned to the five ELD standards (Fox & Fairbairn, 2011; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). The five ELD standards are: (1) Social and Instructional Language; (2) Language of Language Arts; (3) Language of Mathematics; (4) Language of Science; and, (5) Language of Social Studies (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). The assessment results determine service as well as the proficiency levels and labels of ELs: (1) Entering; (2) Emerging; (3) Developing; (4) Expanding; (5) Bridging; and, (6) Reaching (Fox & Fairbairn, 2011; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). Though the WIDA Consortium provides an opportunity for states to have unified assessments, the actual proficiency level for exit from service is determined at the state level (Abedi, 2007; Fox & Fairbairn, 2011; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). Assessments identifying the progress of ELs have had a mixed history of success, ACCESS 2.0 for ELs has some essential components earlier evaluations lacked, including accessible test language and normed scores (Abedi, 2007; Fox & Fairbairn, 2011). However, the variability in exit criteria in various states means one state may define a student as proficient and another may require additional service for a student at the exact same level.

Framework Elements

The next five sections of this paper will explore the specific framework elements impacting the instructional core, partially through considering the sociocultural theory. These framework elements are: (1) Language differences and proficiency; (2) Cultural differences and different backgrounds; (3) Stakeholders; (4) Inclusive practices; and, (5) Educator beliefs and preparation. This theoretical framework is regularly utilized and referred to in the literature supporting ELs, and fundamental to the development of standards that support ELs (Callahan, 2005; DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; Reeves, 2009; Wisconsin Center for Education Research,

2014). This section specifically addresses the impact of these components on educators' knowledge, ELs engagement, and their access and exposure to appropriate content, the instructional core.

Language Differences, Language Proficiency

Language is at the core of the distinction between ELs and their educators and peers and is the principal focus of their ESOL instruction. As described, the identification and proficiency of ELs are based on differences between the language proficiency of the EL in comparison to the expected proficiency of their peers. Full academic language proficiency has three stages which are conversational fluency, discrete language skills, and academic language proficiency (Abedi, 2007; Cummins, 2011). Conversational fluency, sometimes referred to as social language, includes the ability to engage in dialogue. Students generally gain this ability within a year or two. This proficiency accounts for contextual clues including gestures and visual cues (Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011). Discrete language skills include the grammatical, literacy, and phonological knowledge. These skills are developed easily in early elementary grades (Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011). Most ELs in the nation and also within this district are in early elementary grades (Capps et al., 2005; Anonymous, 2017). The final category which is the most difficult to obtain is academic language proficiency. This level of proficiency involves low-frequency words, complex syntax, and abstract expressions (Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011). For ELs to acquire full language proficiency, it normally takes between five to seven years (Cummins, 1979; Cummins; 2011).

Policy makers and educators confuse the levels of proficiency, which highlights the importance of strong assessment protocols (Abedi, 2007; Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011). The driver of instruction is the ELD standards, which are currently not specifically

aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and do not have the same level of specificity as the CCSS (Bailey & Huang, 2011). This lack of alignment requires states, local districts, and educators actively to align the English Language Arts (ELA) CCSS with ELD standards for ELs (Bailey & Huang, 2011). The ELD standards developed and utilized by WIDA are based on the Sociocultural perspective (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). Those standards do not align with CCCS standards (Bailey & Huang, 2011) and are simply: (1) Social and Instructional Language; (2) Language of Language Arts; (3) Language of Mathematics; (4) Language of Science; and, (5) Language of Social Studies (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). The WIDA standards and support materials highlight the role of the sociocultural perspective on language development and the necessity of social interaction in the learning process.

The sociocultural perspective outlines the role of language and social interaction in the development of an individual's cognitive capabilities and learning, which has implications on how teachers instruct students, especially ELs. Teachers supporting ELs must consider their unique linguistic needs, especially their language proficiency. These instructors need to implement the necessary linguistic support students require to engage with the content (Joint Policy Committee, 2001). The social interaction and use of language identified by Vygotsky as essential for cognitive development can be difficult for students to obtain (Vygotsky, 1978). This sociocultural perspective does not take into consideration the transition of learning from L1 (native language) to L2 (English, in this case).

Although Vygotsky (1978) identifies the need for scaffolding within the zone of proximal development, the distinct difference between scaffolding for content or concept versus the language itself is not addressed. Even within a school environment, ELs are often secluded,

gravitating to peers from similar language groups which limit their engagement with other staff and students (McCloud, 2015). Though Vygotsky identifies the importance of the social interaction with "capable peers," he appears focused on tasks and content, utilizing language as a tool to navigate these activities, not the engagement in the language itself or learning of that language (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

The unique linguistic needs of ELs also impact their opportunity to learn. Within the school, teachers often believe that if they provide students the same content and exposure to the curriculum, all students will be successful (Gee, 2008). This is not the case if students are not entering that classroom with equivalent ability or background knowledge. Gee poses the question: "Have all children in a given learning environment had equal opportunity to learn the specialist forms of language vital for thought and action in the domain they are seeking to learn?" (2008, p. 100). This is not the case for many ELs due to their lack of English language proficiency; they are often not exposed to the language-specific to a content area or content itself (Callahan, 2005). This perspective identifies the need to scaffold and ensure the needs of all students are addressed, though it does not specifically recognize the potential of non-verbal supports, such as pictures and visuals in knowledge development.

ELs are different from their native English-speaking peers as they are simultaneously learning the language and the content within their classroom. Educators "must know how to provide appropriately scaffolded opportunities for ELs to learn to use academic language" to support the language needs (De Jong & Harper, 2005, p.158).

Cultural Differences, Different Backgrounds

The sociocultural perspective, specifically the work of Vygotsky, also identifies the critical role of culture in cognitive development (van der Veer, 1996). Within the field of TESOL

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), there is limited theorizing on the concept of culture with a focus on a fixed concept of culture and identity (Ramachandran, 2017). Atkinson (1999; 2013) states that culture includes individuality and the social groups making the understanding of a student's culture complex and fluid. He explains the concept of transcultural as the "…acknowledgment and acceptance of multiple, complex cultural identities - which must have its foundation in really knowing one's students individually-culturally" (Atkinson, 1999, p. 644). Critical cultural reflection acknowledges the impact of cultural stereotypes and the impact on how people see themselves and others; it is through hard, open conversation that people can change their perceptions of themselves and others (Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Ramachandran, 2017). Hall (2011) provides clarity by highlighting the importance of an individual's positioning within a social group and the influence this has on one's opinions of other cultures. Gee (2008) clarified that if the instruction is not individualized, it can result in different opportunities to learn. An educator with a different background or experiences from his students might have difficulty recognizing his individual student's needs.

Ladson-Billings (1995) identifies the three critical components of culturally relevant teaching as "an ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness" (p.483). Through these concepts of culture and culturally relevant teaching, a clear need exists to recognize the fundamental role of educators, their cultural experiences, and background, in supporting students in exploring their own cultural identities. In a district with a rapidly growing, but small population of ELs, many of the staff may have different perspectives and life experiences from their students. Educators must consider their students background in the development of lessons and supports (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007). The sociocultural

perspective frames the role of language, culture, and social interaction in the development of an individual's education, which has direct implications to how educators instruct and interact with ELs. Their unique cultural identity is partly linked to their family and national identity (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; Atkinson, 1999). Many are born in the United States, however, raised by immigrant parents with the cultural norms associated with their families' country of origin. As an educator, understanding a student's complex cultural identity is critical to the student's success.

Stakeholders – Families and Students

ELs and their families are linguistically and culturally different from their native English-speaking peers. The policies that drive educational policy have an impact on the families of ELs and their school engagement (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Lareau, 2011; McCloud, 2015). Student and family engagement are critical to the success of students; this is particularly the case in urban settings (Ogbu, 1974). There are challenges to engaging families, which are compounded in the case of immigrant families that struggle with a foreign school setting and language barriers (Viramontez Anguiano, Lopez, 2012). Anthropological studies use ethnographies to provide insights on socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse populations (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). Ethnography utilizes "close observation social practices and interactions" as a source for a qualitative method and analysis (Asher, Miller, & Green, 2012, p. 3). Such studies can provide insight on equity and access, which provide key understandings to the programming and assistance teachers need to implement and support this population. ELs and their families, many of whom are immigrants, differ from their native English-speaking peers in both English language proficiency and cultural norms (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; McCloud, 2015; Viramontez Anguiano & Lopez, 2012).

A seminal work that utilizes the ethnographic approach is Unequal Childhoods (Lareau, 2011). Lareau (2011) engages in a participant observation protocol with 12 families from three different socioeconomic backgrounds – categorized as poor, working class, and middle class. The working class and poor families did not engage with their children, in the same way, utilizing direct commands and little discourse (Lareau, 2011). The daily activities and discourse of middle-class families provide opportunities for their children, not afforded to working-class or poor families. Lareau's (2011) analysis identified behaviors of middle-class families, in contrast to working-class and poor families, which developed agency and provided opportunities to their children, regardless of race, implying it was socioeconomic status that drove differences. With ELs and their families, this type of evaluation can result in identifying interactions or behaviors that may reflect cultural norms or language proficiency (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Lareau, 2011; McCloud, 2015).

As a result of these differences, supporting and advocating for their children may be different for parents of ELs. The families of ELs often feel inadequate or unable to support their students' learning because they do not speak the language (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Lareau, 2011). To engage in these activities, families of some ELs may require assurance and specific training (Wessels, 2014). To properly engage EL families, a school must provide deliberate opportunities within the school setting for these families to be heard so that they understand their expertise is valued (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007). Without these supports, the parents and students may not be comfortable engaging with educational staff, instead deferring to them as authorities (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007). Creating supportive and safe opportunities can be especially critical for undocumented families (Viramontez Anguiano & Lopez, 2012).

A common misconception in working with the families of ELs is to recommend English-only support or English language use at home (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981). This mistake can be detrimental to the families' beliefs about their ability to support their student and the literacy gains of the student. These families often struggle to support their students in a language they do not understand and simultaneously implementing a practice that is not pedagogically sound (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981; Wessels, 2014). In California, Proposition 227 eliminated bilingual programming and limited instructional programs for ELs, however, these instructional changes resulted in a reduction of bilingual support to the families of ELs (Collier & Auerbach, 2011). This educational policy directly impacted the support for immigrant families. This forced practice of requiring parents to support schools, and ultimately their families, in a language in which they are not fluent can be both detrimental to the progress of the student and impact the families' engagement (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981). The families of ELs need support in their native language, support with engagement in school, and acknowledgment of the benefits of their cultural and linguistic differences. Unfortunately, policies and practices can limit this support.

ELs are impacted by their families' interactions with the school and the policies and laws governing their education. McCloud (2015) conducted an ethnographic study in a school community with a rapidly growing Spanish-speaking Latino population, which had recently increased from below one percent to almost 14 percent of the school population. Though rapidly growing, ELs remained a small portion of the school population. The ELs in this study gravitated to peers from similar language groups and limited their engagement with other staff and students (McCloud, 2015).

ELs are linguistically and culturally different from their native English-speaking peers, which can result in difficult and isolating situations (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; Hos, 2016). This sense of isolation within a school environment can be more challenging in cases in districts with a low incidence of ELs (Hos, 2016). Within the mainstream classroom and school, they often struggle with the instruction, academic demands, and interpersonal communication (McCloud, 2015). However, many have a drastically different role in their families; being bilingual they often support their parents in navigating school and life (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007). However, when ELs are isolated, they often rely on their ESOL teacher as an advocate to perform tasks that other students are expected to perform themselves and sometimes ignoring the protocols established by the school for tasks as simple as when to call home (McCloud, 2015). This dichotomy can result in one persona in school and another at home, with the student often feeling inadequate at school. The school administrators simultaneously often treat the ESOL teacher as the main connection between the students and their families and the school itself (McCloud, 2015). As such, all educators need to be prepared to support ELs and their families.

Much of the legislation supporting ELs has directly impacted the instruction of ELs (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001; Olson, 2007). Olson (2007) explains "state and district policy negatively influences classroom pedagogy in a way that provides ELs with fewer opportunities to learn and develop their knowledge and skills despite the legal, instructional and curricular freedom to use the students' language in instruction" (p.138). The legislation, family support, and societal beliefs have a direct impact on the individual EL's educational experience, ultimately impacting their access to the instruction necessary to support their needs. Within the classroom, there are also specific factors that impact their opportunity to learn.

Inclusive Practices

Meeting individual student needs means more than scaffolding, it also requires acknowledging a student's differences in prior and background knowledge (Gee, 2008; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). The same lesson and support, if not individualized, can result in different opportunities to learn (Gee, 2008). A teacher needs to recognize student individuality, and the resulting need to diversify his or her approach based on each student's current knowledge base. One way to support a diverse population is to compare learning in and out of school (Resnick, 1987). Outside of school, learning is contextual, social, and uses task-specific tools, in direct contrast to common instruction within the school (Resnick, 1987). An example of this is the use of math. In school, it is often abstract formulas, but outside the school, it is based on an actual necessary situation and integrated into the task (Resnick, 1987). Teachers need to provide students with authentic, relevant tasks, supporting their students' learning.

Inclusion can be defined in many ways, from full participation in a mainstream classroom to the number of courses appropriate for college acceptance, to language goals aligned to standards (Callahan et al., 2010; Platt, Harper, & Mendoza, 2003). Sometimes legislation directly drives requirements, including state-specific legislation like Proposition 227 and national policy like NCLB, regardless of a student's need or readiness (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001; Menken, 2010). Though even with these types of legislative demands, the opportunities of ELs compared to their peers is limited (Callahan, 2005; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Some TESOL professionals "conceptualize ESL regarding pull out, or separation, programs," without consideration for the specific language needs of the students or the language requirements for the standards in their grade level (Platt, Harper, & Mendoza, 2003, p.106). Though studies of EL performance indicate language minority students that are not recent

immigrants and do not have low English proficiency experienced negative impact if enrolled in ESOL classes (Callahan et al., 2010).

In a study of forty-four Florida districts, administrators provided mixed reviews of inclusion, finding that there are concerns that have an impact on the appropriate and necessary language support for ELs and the specialization and professionalism of TESOL professionals (Platt, Harper, & Mendoza, 2003). These concerns are often echoed in surveys of educators supporting ELs in the general classroom, citing a desire to help ELs but concerns about scaffolding and accommodating (Reeves, 2006; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). A study of Canadian educators showed that only one of the 21 educators appropriately assigned student records to the appropriate level of educational programming based on purely academic factors, citing other factors including the stress of the programming (Riley, 2015). Educators, administrator, and teachers have beliefs and concerns that dictate the educational placement decisions of ELs. Those expectations can result in ELs not being exposed to the core course offering or opportunities of their peers (Callahan, 2005; McCloud, 2015).

Some might argue ELs need the support of separate classes and special instruction, which can be true in some cases. Even ELs with strong educational performance are limited in their opportunities to advanced programming (Riley, 2015). A study of successful educators, as indicated by the performance of their students on state assessments, showed that they have high short-term expectations of poor Mexican students specifically as it relates to the state assessment, did not have the same level of expectations for the long-term success of their students (Garza & Garza, 2010). These white female educators failed to identify or recognize the strengths of their students, viewing their unique cultural and linguistic background as a deficit (Garza & Garza, 2010). This deficit approach appears to continue, even with some preliminary research on the

benefits of bilingualism on improving executive function (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008). This change in the mindset of educators is critical to the success of ELs.

Educators Beliefs and Preparation

A teacher's beliefs and pre-conceived notions have an established impact on student performance (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). This is particularly impactful for students from cultural and linguistic backgrounds different from their educators, even for those educators with a desire to teach in an urban setting (Terrill & Mark, 2000). ELs are culturally and linguistically diverse from their peers and their educators (McCloud, 2015; Reeves, 2004). Educators of ELs are culturally and linguistically diverse from their students. These differences can impact their beliefs of their students and ultimately the performance of the students themselves.

This, however, is a simplification of the larger issue. Understanding the actual differences, and specifically, the misconceptions or beliefs of educators are critical to deeply addressing this issue. Even in the case of successful educators and successful students, their beliefs about the potential of ELs ultimately affects the opportunities of their students (Garza & Garza, 2010; Riley, 2015). Successful educators, defined by students that performed well on state assessments, failed to recognize the strengths of their students, viewing unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a deficit (Garza & Garza, 2010).

The concept of implicit bias, unconscious preferences or thought patterns, can possibly account for this disconnect between an educator's desire to support their students and the beliefs or conceptions that negatively impact the actualization of that desire (Staats, 2016). The performance gap between minority students in academic settings can be impacted negatively by the implicit racial biases of their educators as it relates to their instruction (Jacoby-Senghor,

Sinclair, & Shelton, 2016). Educators with ELs may hold implicit bias related to the linguistic differences between them and their educators; specifically, educators adopting the superiority of English above other languages (Motha, 2006). It is essential for educators to identify these bias or notions in order to mitigate the impact of these biases on the instruction of their students (Staats, 2016).

Mezirow (1997) classifies a system of pre-conceived notions and expectancies as a frame of reference'; this perspective informs an individual's understanding of their encounters, development of knowledge, and, at times, rejection of new information that is inconsistent with their current viewpoint. These frames result in general tendencies or biases that influence and categorize a person's experiences and impact how they make meaning, referred to as habits of mind (Mezirow, 1997). To transform an established frame of reference, an individual must participate in self-reflection that includes examining one's own beliefs. This is beyond simple deliberation and is identified as a critical self-reflection of assumptions (Mezirow, 1998). Mezirow (1997, 1998) considers critical reflection that results in the restructuring of a person's self-identity or questioning of their pre-established schema as a transformative learning experience.

If a teacher preparatory program only focuses on instructional strategies, it will miss the complexity of needs required to support linguistically and culturally diverse students (Molle, 2013). Teachers need exposure to discourse beyond simple instructional strategies to support ELs. Otherwise, it may result in "the unforeseen consequence of perpetuating views of ELs as deficient and inferior to their native English-speaking peers" (Molle, 2013, p. 120). Teachers need to address the students' linguistic needs academically; however, they must also support the unique challenges that result from linguistic and cultural diversity.

Educators who support ELs need specific pedagogical knowledge of language acquisition to support their unique linguistic needs (Sehlaoui & Shinge, 2013). These instructors for ELs are identified through a K-12 certification in ESOL instruction in Maryland, (Educational Testing Service, 2016). The NCLB Act, which since its passage has transformed education, changed the evaluation of teacher quality (Mehta, 2013). The requirements and evaluation of teacher quality did not just focus on the student or educator performance but established the requirement for highly qualified teachers (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). These teacher qualification requirements have changed how schools and districts recruit and staff schools. The desire for highly qualified teachers has resulted in some districts, especially those in high-poverty areas, adopting incentive programs to recruit teachers with specific certifications or qualifications, such as ESOL or bilingual teachers (Strunk & Zeehandelaar, 2011).

In Maryland and other states, this certification can be obtained through specific coursework or by simply taking the PRAXIS in ESOL (Educational Testing Service, 2016). ESOL teachers who qualified through testing do not necessarily understand applied linguistics to the same degree as their colleagues who were formally trained in ESOL instruction through accredited coursework (Sehlaoui & Shinge, 2013). Yet, in rapidly growing districts like Baltimore, where ESOL educators are in high demand, these educators are recruited and hired, even though they may lack the necessary background knowledge. This lack of preparation and beliefs of educators can impact the success of ELs.

Summary of Underlying Causes and Factors

The adapted PELP Coherence Framework developed to focus on the engagement and language development of ELs in this district. Policy, politics, identification, and standards changes create the environment of the system. Language, culture, practices, educators, and

stakeholders constitute the framework elements and together with environmental factors establish the underlying causes and factors that impact the instructional core. Specifically, the impact on an educator's expertise in supporting ELs engagement and access to appropriately challenging content.

Chapter 2 – Needs Assessment

Introduction

As the adapted PELP Coherence Framework represented, there are several underlying causes and factors impacting the instruction of ELs. Some of these factors impact the environment of the educational system. The remaining framework elements identified are part of the educational system, organized as culture, language, stakeholders, educators, and practices impacting ELs. This needs assessment is designed to explore the Problem of Practice within this district to specifically identify how cultural and linguistic knowledge and beliefs about the potential inclusion of ELs are manifested in this context and impacted by an educator's background and expertise.

Context of Study

There is a mixed history concerning the link between teacher quality and student outcomes (Coleman et al., 1966; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). A teacher's beliefs and preconceived notions have an established impact on student performance (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). In fact, with ELs, educator beliefs can impact a student's inclusionary opportunities (Reeves, 2002; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). With a rapidly growing EL population in this district (Anonymous, 2017), it is critical to understand the knowledge of the educators and manifestation of their beliefs, and the impact on an educator's background or previous experience on that knowledge or those beliefs. This provides an opportunity to determine the needs of educators, both ESOL and general, to better support ELs and ensure they have successful inclusionary opportunities.

Statement of Purpose

Two specific goals guided the development of this needs assessment. The first is to understand the impact of an educators' beliefs and preconceived notions of the inclusion of ELs and whether an educator's background or previous experience is a factor in those beliefs. The second goal is to utilize findings from the first to inform professional development programming for educators in this district supporting ELs. These goals guided the development of the research questions and survey. The three research questions driving the needs assessment are designed to understand the impact of the Problem of Practice in this district.

- RQ 1: What are teachers' preconceived notions or expectations about ELD?
- RQ 2: What is the impact of an educator's background on preconceived notions or expectations about ELD?

Method

In this section, the method of this needs assessment will be described. There will be an explanation of the participants, measures and instrumentation, data collection methods, and data analysis.

Participants

The online survey was completed by 110 participants who are educators in this district. Table 1 describes the profile and roles of the educators that participated in the survey. Most of the participants are female teachers and currently work at elementary or elementary/middle schools. Over half report working in schools where the population of ELs is high or greater than 25%, while 14.6% of the respondents knew it was a high number but did not know the exact percentage. The largest group to participate in the survey was ESOL teachers, with 59 contributors.

Table 1

School Role and Profile

(N=110)	**Overall Sample N (%)**
Gender	
Female	90 (81.82)
Male	15 (13.64)
I prefer not to identify.	4 (3.64)
Did Not Answer	1 (0.91)
School Role	
ESOL Teacher	59 (53.64)
Teacher – Not ESOL	24 (21.82)
School Administrators	4 (3.64)
District Administrators	4 (3.64)
Para-educator	9 (8.18)
Related Services Provider or Guidance Counselor	10 (9.09)

Measures and Instrumentations

The tool utilized primarily consists of questions from a survey conducted and validated by Jenelle Reeves (2002, 2006) in a quantitative study of mainstream secondary teachers' beliefs about the inclusion of ELs. The paper survey was conducted with 279 high school teachers at a mid-sized Southeastern city with a low incidence (low population) of ELs (Reeves, 2006). The results of the survey indicated that though most educators would welcome ELs into their classes, they worried about their ability to properly service them in that setting and expressed concerns with accommodating the instruction or curriculum (Reeves, 2006). The findings also indicated that teachers did not feel strongly about the need for professional development, but simultaneously held mistaken beliefs about language acquisition (Reeves, 2006). This survey provided a chance to explore specific beliefs and potential discrepancies in those beliefs, with explicit connections to the educators' background and previous experiences including

professional development and learning. Interestingly, Reeves never administered this survey with ESOL educators. The tool was tested with a few ESOL educators and was adjusted as needed.

Reeves (2002, 2006) developed the survey focused on six topics identified as challenges and perceptions of educators working with ELs. Each topic had multiple questions associated with it. The six topics explored were: (1) beliefs and expectations associated with time, (2) modification, (3) language acquisition, (4) educational environment, (5) professional development, and (6) general attitude toward inclusion of ELs. In addition to these measures, additional questions were added to determine the beliefs and use of culturally relevant practices (Hoffman & Chapman, 2017). The tool measured the beliefs and expectations of general and ESOL educators on the inclusion of ELs by measuring specifically about language acquisition and culturally relevant pedagogy and simultaneously measured the educator's background and experiences to determine the impact of their background on their beliefs. It also looked at cultural and linguistic experiences to determine an educator's background and the impact of that on their beliefs and expectations. Those measures included coursework and experiences like being bilingual or living abroad for an extended time.

The data collection tool is an anonymous online survey found in Appendix A composed of assorted types of questions, including dichotomous, multiple choice, Likert scale, frequency, and open-ended. The seventy-one questions focused on assessing an educator's background, current role, beliefs about the inclusion of ELs, and their cultural and linguistic knowledge. Though the majority of the survey questions were directly from Reeves (2002, 2006) survey, additional questions were added to ascertain the educator's background, teaching experience, and knowledge of culturally relevant practices. Questions were customized to participants using conditional logic based on answers. For example, someone selecting the role of administrator the

survey would not be asked what subjects they currently teach. It also utilized the Likert and frequency scale questions to identify potential misconceptions or preconceived notions or their manifestation. The questions specifically addressed knowledge of language learning with statements like 'English learners should avoid using their native language in school'.

Data Collection Methods

The survey was housed on K12 Insight, a survey tool utilized by educators in this district and it was administered with a single URL, which allowed an anonymous link to be shared with participants. The tool assigned participants a response number, however, did not associate responses with identifying information. The survey was sent directly to ESOL educators, through an email. The message encouraged them to share the link with other staff, including administrators and general educators, in their schools. It was also shared with leadership team members within the district office, encouraging them to share their points of contacts in schools. For example, a staff lead working with related service providers shared with related service providers in schools.

Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis utilized a variety of methods to compare responses and determine the impact of an educator's background on their cultural and linguistic knowledge and their preconceived notions and beliefs. The data analysis was done through descriptive statistics, analyzing the replies of specific response groups (Sprinthall, 1997). Key information obtained about participant background, current role, and specific knowledge and beliefs were reviewed to determine trends and compare results between participant groups.

This analysis compared ESOL educators, educators that are bilingual, and educators with linguistic and cultural experiences and analyzed their responses to specific indicators. ESOL

educators were analyzed fully as a separate population because ELs are dependent on their ESOL educators for support more than their general educators (McCloud, 2015). Additionally, ELs require specific pedagogical knowledge of language acquisition (Sehlaoui & Shinge, 2013) and ESOL educators are certified to provide that support (Educational Testing Service, 2016). The results of this analysis provided insight into the cultural and linguistic knowledge and preconceived notions and beliefs of educators in this district.

Findings and Discussion

This section includes detailed reporting of the findings and discussion of those results.

Findings

The findings indicate that ESOL educators have some of the similar preconceived notions and beliefs of ELs as other teachers, with some of these beliefs directly conflicting with the literature regarding ELD and supports for ELs.

Educators Personal and Professional Backgrounds

The majority of participants answered all the questions, as previously noted the majority of participants are female educators and more than half are ESOL educators. Table 2 represents the participant's preparatory program and educational experience. Though the majority of participants went through a traditional education program, ESOL educators were more likely to have gone through an alternative program. Twenty-seven of the educators reported completing an alternative program for teacher preparation and 17 did not respond or chose other as an option. Within the other option, some reported alternative certification programs and other types of certifications for related service providers or paraeducators. The participants reported a range of professional certifications, with 56.6% reporting an ESOL certificate. The participants had a range of teaching experience. However, almost half have taught for 10 years or more.

Table 2

Educator Preparation and Teaching Experience

(N=110)	**Overall Sample N (%)**	**Educator – Not ESOL (N=51) N (%)**	**ESOL Teachers (N=59) N (%)**
Teacher Preparation Program			
Traditional	63 (52.27)	25 (49.02)	38 (64.41)
Alternative	27 (24.55)	10 (19.61)	17 (28.81)
Other	17 (15.45)	13 (25.49)	4 (6.78)
Did not answer.	3 (2.73)	3 (5.88)	
Years in Education			
Less than one year	2 (1.82)		2 (3.39)
1 to less than 3 years	10 (9.09)	6 (11.76)	4 (6.78)
3 to less than 5 years	11 (10.00)	7 (13.73)	4 (6.78)
5 to less than 7 years	16 (14.55)	10 (19.61)	6 (10.17)
7 to less than 10 years	17 (15.45)	5 (9.80)	12 (20.34)
10 years more	54 (49.09)	23 (45.10)	31 (52.54)

The educators' backgrounds and experiences varied the majority of participants have taken coursework in cultural studies, as represented in Table 3, and have received professional development on supporting ELs. However, only slightly more than half have ever taken a linguistics course. Amongst the ESOL educators, a quarter had never taken classes in linguistics, though many have personal experience with language. Only 12 educators are non-native English speakers, though more than half reported they speak another language and over a quarter are fluent in that language. The majority of the ESOL educators speak another language, with a third fluent in that language.

Table 3

Educator's Cultural and Linguistic Experience

(N=110)	Overall N (%)	Educator – Not ESOL (N=51) N (%)	ESOL Teachers (N=59) N (%)
Cultural Studies Course			
Taken	84 (76.36)	32 (62.75)	52 (882.14)
Not Taken	26 (23.64)	19 (37.27)	7 (11.86)
Linguistics Course			
Taken	61 (55.45)	17 (33.33)	44 (74.58)
Not Taken	49 (44.55)	34 (66.67)	15 (25.42)
Cultural Experience			
Lived in Another Country for More Than Two Months	52 (47.27)	15 (29.41)	37 (62.71)
Lived with Someone from Another Country	54 (49.09)	21 (41.18)	33 (55.93)
Language Experience			
Speak Another Language	73 (66.36)	31 (60.78)	42 (71.19)
Fluent in Another Language	31 (28.18)	13 (25.49)	18 (30.51)
Non-Native English Speaker	12 (10.91)	9 (17.65)	3 (5.08)

Educator Beliefs and Expectations

The analysis of beliefs and expectations indicate that the vast majority of teachers, including ESOL teachers, support the inclusion of ELs in general education classes. However, over a third believe they should attain a minimum level of English proficiency before being included in those classes. Table 4 indicates 11 out of 59 ESOL educators believe ELs should acquire proficiency in two years. Nineteen ESOL educators, 32.20%, believe retention is a good policy for newcomers; slightly higher percentage than 30.91% of all educators indicating the same belief. Fifty educators, less than half, worry that general education teachers do not have enough time to support ELs with 42.37% of ESOL teachers identifying this concern.

Table 4

Educator Beliefs and Expectations

(N=110)	Overall Sample N (%)	Educator – Not ESOL (N=51) N (%)	ESOL Teachers (N=59) N (%)
English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.			
Agree or Strongly Agree	30 (27.28)	19 (37.25)	11 (18.64)
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	79 (71.81)	31 (60.78)	48 (81.35)
Did not answer.	1 (0.91)	1 (1.96)	
Retaining English learners can be effective if they are a newcomer in their language proficiency.			
Agree or Strongly Agree	34 (30.91)	15 (29.41)	19 (32.20)
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	72 (65.46)	32 (62.74)	40 (67.79)
Did not answer.	4 (3.64)	4 (7.84)	
General/subject education teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of English learners.			
Agree or Strongly Agree	50 (45.46)	25 (49.02)	25 (42.37)
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	59 (53.63)	25 (49.02)	34 (57.62)
Did not answer.	1 (0.91)	1 (1.96)	

Discussion

The research questions inquire about the preconceived notions and expectations educators and how those understandings align to research on the appropriate linguistic and cultural knowledge necessary to support ELs. Additionally, it questions the impact of educators with different backgrounds including ESOL educators, educators that are bilingual, and educators with language or cultural experiences on that knowledge. The results of this survey indicate though the majority ESOL educators took a cultural studies course, one in four did not take a linguistics course. Linguistics is at the core of their required ESOL instruction. Though language

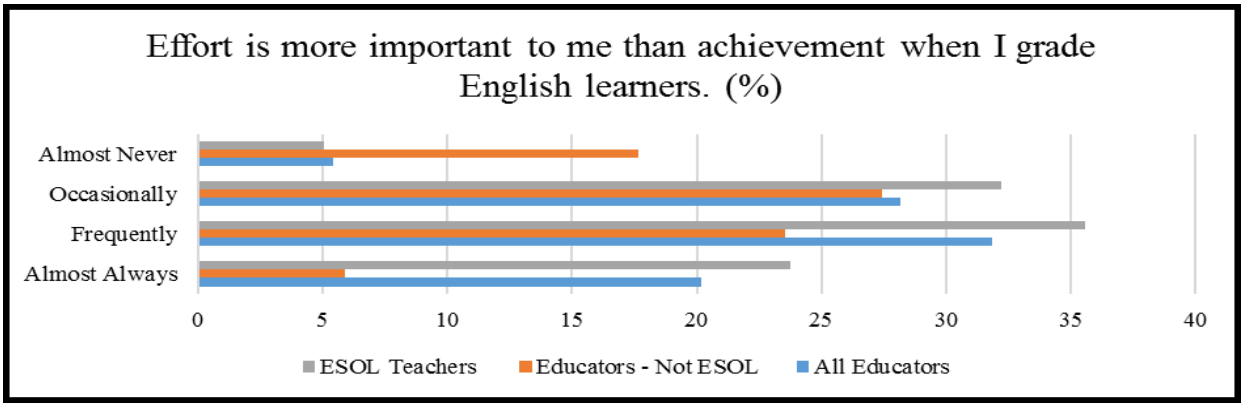
acquisition, specifically ELD, is what an ESOL educator should be providing as ESOL instruction. Those educators with cultural experiences that lived outside the country were more likely than educators that are bilingual to have taken a linguistics or cultural studies course. Thirty-nine educators indicate parents of ELs should utilize English as much as possible at home, nineteen of those are ESOL teachers. This is a common misconception; research in language acquisition has established this has a detrimental impact on student's progress, instead of supporting native language usage, due to the negative impact of exposure to incorrect English language usage (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981). Roughly a third of the educators believe ELs should acquire English in two years, which is contrary to the research indicating it will likely take between five to seven years (Cummins, 1979; Cummins; 2011). The majority of educators with cultural or linguistic experiences, over 90%, understood not to encourage parents to speak English at home and, over 70%, knew not to expect language proficiency in two years.

Almost half of all educators including ESOL educators, educators that are bilingual or those that have had cultural experiences believe general educators do not have enough time to deal with ELs. This belief contradicts a study of EL performance which indicate language minority students have limited benefits from ESOL and support classes, except in cases of early newcomers (Callahan et al., 2010). A third of all participants, including ESOL teachers, consider retention a good practice for supporting newcomers, those ELs new to the country. This corresponds with the research that ELs are more likely to be retained (Willson & Hughes, 2006). Which is contrary to the research, indicating limited long-term benefits of retention (Jimerson et al., 1997; Willson & Hughes, 2006). ESOL educators are slightly more likely to agree that lessening the quantity of coursework for ELs is good practice, though quantity and accommodation are not the same things. ESOL educators are more likely to value effort over

achievement than their peers as indicated in Figure 3. The expectations of the ELs and their abilities seem different for ESOL teachers than general educators, in the case of grading valuing effort more than achievement for ELs. This could indicate a disconnect in their beliefs about an ELs long term potential or an ELs ability to handle grade level content.

Figure 3

Achievement versus Effort of ELs



This diagram of achievement versus effort of ELs is a representation of the results of a prompt concerning whether educators value effort over achievement.

One potential consideration for this analysis is history threat, given the current political climate regarding immigration, many educators might be less forthcoming of their true feelings about ELs (Gibbs, 2012). Throughout this past year, threatened changes to immigration law have resulted in fearful students in this district and dedicated educators feeling passionate about supporting them. This is something that has been addressed on numerous occasions through emails and information shared by leadership, including myself. This occurred on two specific occasions once following the presidential election and another time during an uptick in ICE enforcement activities that involved detainment and deportation of a few student's parents. An additional consideration is the tool developed by Reeves (2002, 2006) did not have a neutral

option, which may have impacted the results. Requiring educators to agree or disagree, though these questions were not mandatory and could be skipped.

Overall, these results indicate that ESOL teachers have some of the same preconceived notions and beliefs of ELs as other educators, with some of these beliefs directly conflicting with the literature regarding language acquisition and EL support. Some of the ESOL teachers have less experience than their peers, with a larger percentage following alternative pathways. During informal observations, it became clear that ESOL educators modified curriculum to a greater degree than general educators. And as results indicate they value effort far more than their peers. The view of grading and this adjustment of the curriculum are interesting factors to explore in further research. The next chapter will focus on the research driving interventions that have impacted this Problem of Practice.

Chapter 3

Impact of Pre-Conceived Notions and Beliefs

To understand the impact of an educators' beliefs, preconceived notions of the inclusion of ELs, and whether an educator's background or previous experience is a factor in those beliefs, a needs assessment survey was conducted with educators in this Mid-Atlantic urban district. This survey was completed by 110 educators in this distict which included 59 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers. The results indicated that educators, including ESOL teachers, have preconceived notions and beliefs about English Language Development (ELD) that directly contradict the research on language acquisition. One example is how approximately a third of the educators believe ELs should acquire English in two years, which is contrary to the research indicating that language aquistion will likely take between five to seven years (Cummins, 1979; Cummins; 2011). The needs assessment may reflect a finding from the research literature in that educators that are culturally and linguistically diverse from their students might have limited expectations about student potential and inaccurate beliefs about language acquisition (Reeves, 2006; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001).

Sociocultural Perspective

In order to intervene on this identified divide between educators and their students, it is critical to understand the role of language in cognitive development and ultimately, on learning. Piaget (1972; 2013) described cognitive development in discrete stages. However, this perspective provided a limited role for language and culture on those stages of development. Through the influence of Vygotsky (1978), cognitive development was redefined with a clear role for language as a tool in that progression.

Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky (1978) explains that a child begins to identify the world, not just through visual perceptions, but also by providing linguistic labels for objects in their world. That same child later utilizes their capability for language engagement to navigate and identify solutions to difficult tasks. In part, this is due to their use of inner speech, which enables a person the ability to problem solve and guides their behaviors through activities of all difficulties. This perspective highlights the essential role of language in the development of higher-level thinking skills and processing of new information.

Language continues to play a critical role beyond cognitive development, specifically in the social interactions that result in learning. The parameters of this learning process are described by Vygotsky (1978) as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is the range in the developmental stage between problem-solving with support from adults or more competent peers and independent problem-solving. Critical to this interaction is the role of the adult or peer in supporting and recognizing the learning process with the appropriate scaffolding. (Bruner, 1978; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). This scaffolding includes language exchanges that guide learning as well as higher-level questioning techniques that appropriately challenge a student, all within their ZPD. Application in an educational context, emphasizes the critical role of an educator having a clear understanding of students' current capabilities and appropriately scaffolding for them through language prompts.

The sociocultural perspective, specifically the work of Vygotsky, also identifies the critical role of culture in cognitive development (van der Veer, 1996). However, this concept of culture appears limited to ideas and definitions and does not include customs or values within a

culture (van der Veer, 1996). Even with this limitation, the sociocultural perspective provides an essential lens for the role of the educator in supporting their students.

The Instructional Core

The Adapted Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) Coherence Framework, represented in Figure 2, is intended to assist leaders in identifying the interconnectedness of crucial factors of their district when executing reform efforts or changes (Coherence Framework, 2020). At the epicenter of an adapted PELP Coherence Framework identified is the instructional core, which shows the three essential components of instruction: student, teacher, and content (Childress et al., 2007). In this adaptation of the *instructional core*, the student is an EL, the content is focused on ELD, and the educators are those working with ELs. Surrounding the instructional core is the *theory of change*, which will describe the core beliefs about how to improve the instructional core.

Sociocultural Perspective on the Instructional Core

The sociocultural perspective outlines the role of language and social interaction in the development of an individual's cognitive capabilities and learning, which has implications on how educators instruct students, especially ELs. Examining an EL's unique linguistic needs, especially their language proficiency, can strengthen the interaction and instruction between the educator and student; especially when that instruction includes implementing the necessary linguistic support required for an EL to engage with the content (Joint Policy Committee, 2001). In the case of ELs, this requires understanding the transition of learning from L1 (native language) to L2 (English, in this case). Although Vygotsky (1978) identifies the need for scaffolding within the ZPD. The distinct difference between scaffolding for content or concept versus the language itself is not addressed.

Classroom Settings

Education of ELs is governed by the instructional model, or service delivery model, which creates the context for the instructional core. A variety of instructional models are utilized to support the instruction of ELs. These models range from pull out, push in/co-teaching, sheltered content instruction, ESOL class, and dual language instruction and involve both ESOL and general educators working with ELs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Duke & Mabbott, 2001; Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Stufft & Brogadir, 2011; Rennie, 1993). The instructional model creates the environment for the instructional core and impacts the level of ESOL instruction and interaction between ELs, their educators, and the task.

Instructional Models

The pull out model utilizes an ESOL educator to provide ELs instruction in a small group setting, usually grouped by language proficiency and grade band. Students are removed from general instruction for ELD; this model is most common in elementary schools (Stufft & Brogadir, 2011; Rennie, 1993; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). The advantage of this model is that it allows time for focused ELD (Duke & Mabbott, 2001; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). However, it can be challenging to coordinate with general educators to ensure students do not miss critical content and the ESOL service itself, which is often less than an hour, may not be enough time to fully service ELs (Duke & Mabbott, 2001). Nevertheless, when there is only one ESOL educator in a Pre-K-8 or Pre-K-5 school, this might be the only way to schedule direct service.

Push in/co-teaching allows the ESOL educator to work collaboratively with a general educator to plan and deliver instruction (Duke & Mabbott, 2001). This model includes a variety of co-teaching strategies and requires time for collaboration (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). A case

study of a large urban district indicates a significant increase in performance of ELs with effective collaboration and co-teaching strategies (York-Barr, Ghere, & Sommerness, 2007). This model can also allow time for focused ELD (Duke & Mabbott, 2001; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). The disadvantage is the limited time with language peers (Duke & Mabbott, 2001). This model also requires coordination of planning time and is best when the general and ESOL educator build trust and confidence in the partnership (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010).

The instructional model that is most common for secondary schools is sheltered content instruction which is focused on providing content instruction in a way that ELs can understand and be adapted to an ELs proficiency level (Rennie, 1993; Stufft & Brogadir, 2011; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). One formal version is Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), which recommends that educators are careful of their own language usage and that they allow students to use their first language (L1) when appropriate (Echeverria et al., 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008). SIOP was developed based on a rigorous review of research on supporting ELs, and results indicate it benefits ELs (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). ELs are taught the academic content through adaptations for their proficiency levels (WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017).

The fourth instructional model is a self-contained ESOL class. In an elementary school, this model can be led by an ESOL teacher supporting language development in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies (Duke & Mabbott, 2001). In a middle or high school setting, students are usually afforded a separate scheduled ESOL class (Rennie, 1993; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). The advantage is that it allows time for focused ELD (Duke & Mabbott, 2001; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). However, it is intended for new arrivals and can sometimes create an isolated environment (Duke & Mabbott, 2001). When there

is only one ESOL educator in a secondary school, this might be the only way to schedule direct service.

Instruction can also be provided by a bilingual and bi-literate educator that supports both ELs and native English speakers. Bi-lingual instruction delivery and materials are provided in both English and native language of the second population in the classroom, for example, provided in English and Spanish (Rennie, 1993; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). This model allows time for ELs to interact with language peers and continue to develop proficiency within their native language (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Duke & Mabbott, 2001; WIDA Consortium at WCER, 2017). An analysis of 23 districts from 15 states, including large urban districts, indicate higher academic outcomes for students participating in bilingual programs (Collier & Thomas, 2004). Though it might be a solution in urban areas, it requires an educator that is bilingual (and biliterate) in both languages (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Stufft & Brogadir, 2011). It also requires a bilingual population from one language group concentrated at one school (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Duke & Mabbott, 2001); in this district ELs speak 62 different languages (Anonymous, 2017). Bilingual instruction cannot be implemented with just ESOL staffing as it requires bilingual and biliterate general educators for each class.

As the needs assessment indicates, all the models are utilized in this district. However, the most common models are pull out, push in, and sheltered instruction (Ohanian, 2017). Though various models have shown greater success than others, the resources and distribution of students and staff can end up driving the decision making around the instructional model (Moughamian, Rivera, Francis, 2009). Additionally, while models can address the frequency and duration of ESOL service, they do not address the interaction between the educator and EL or the beliefs about ELs and ELD that the educator might hold. Sheltered instruction is the one model

in the design that focuses on how to make content accessible to ELs, through adjustments to language. This key focus aligns with the role of language in the sociocultural perspective. The instructional approaches identified in the sheltered instruction model can be examined to better understand strategies to support ELs.

Strategies to Support ELs

Sociocultural perspective outlines the role of language and social interaction in the development of an individual's cognitive capabilities and learning, which has implications for how teachers instruct students. Within the school, teachers often believe that if they provide students the same content and exposure to the curriculum, all students will be successful. However, meeting an individual student's needs through the application of social interactions means more than scaffolding, it also requires acknowledging a student's differences including background knowledge (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Gee, 2008). The same lesson and support, if not individualized, can result in different Opportunities to Learn (OTL) (Gee, 2008). Recognizing a student's individual need can help educators diversify their approach to support the instruction. Gee (2008) recognizes that the breadth of knowledge required for learning, especially in areas requiring specific forms of language, can lead to different OTL. This is particularly applicable for ELs, who due to their language proficiency are often not exposed to the appropriate content (Callahan, 2005). ELs are different from their native English-speaking peers as they are simultaneously learning the language and the content within their classroom.

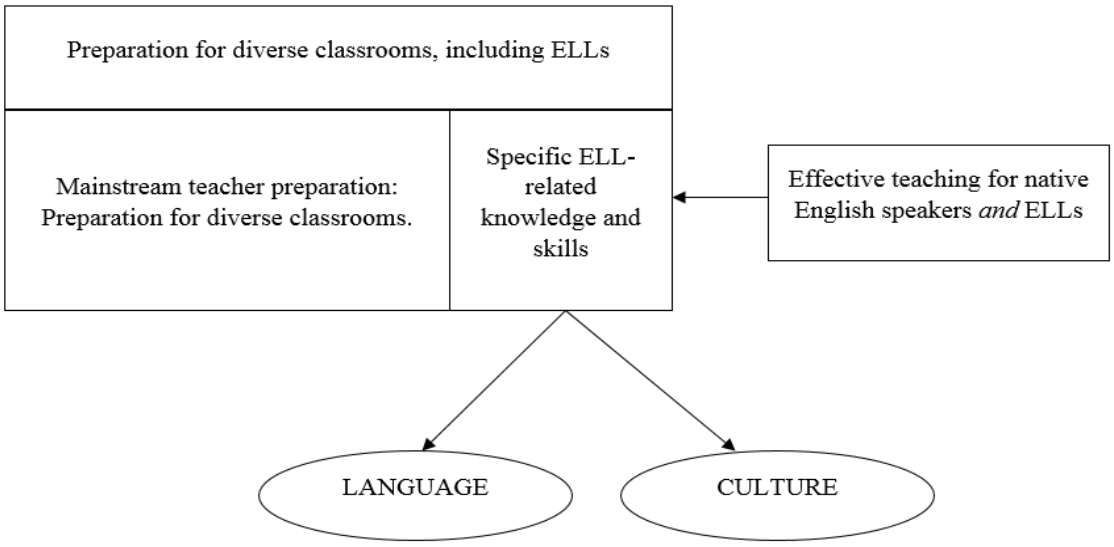
Is It Just Good Teaching?

De Jong and Harper (2004; 2004; 2005) identify a common misconception in education which is the belief that supporting ELs is Just Good Teaching (JGT). They explain that many educators and teacher educators believe the instructional practices that support native English

speakers from racially or socioeconomically diverse backgrounds are not different from those that would support ELs. De Jong and Harper (2004; 2004; 2005) recommend the framework identified in Figure 4 for educators working in integrated classrooms. The framework defines specific considerations for language and culture, which are critical for ELs. This structure, like the sociocultural perspective, highlights the essential role of language in the development of cognitive ability. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and the concept of a student's opportunity to learn are vital components of this perspective and particularly impactful to English learners. De Jong and Harper (2004; 2004; 2005) assert that too many educators do not have the professional development and training to consider the specific linguistic and cultural needs of ELs.

Figure 4

Effective Teacher Preparation for Integrated Classrooms



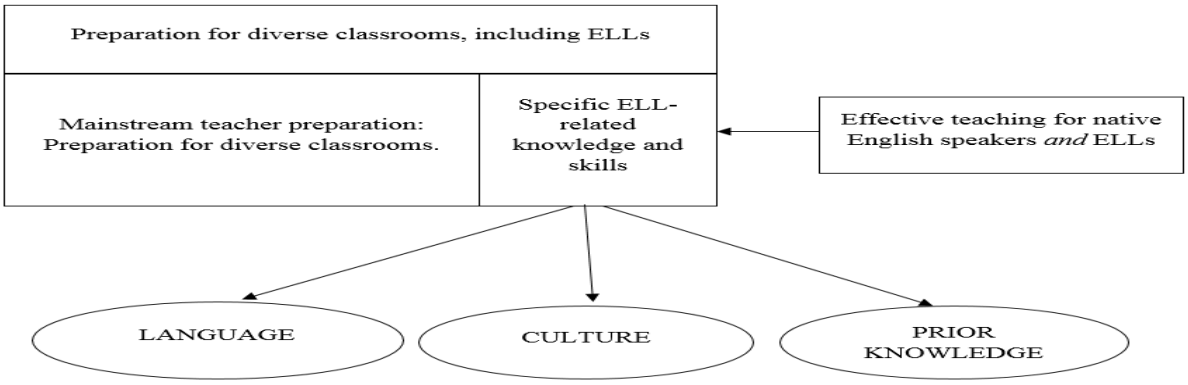
Effective Teacher Preparation for Integrated Classrooms outlines components of instruction educators working with ELs must consider. (de Jong & Harper, 2005)

Supporting ELs - Language, Culture, and Prior Knowledge

Some ELs are experiencing the language and culture for the first time and struggle in the academic setting with peers and educators that are linguistically and culturally different (DaSilva Iddings, & Katz, 2007; Hos, 2016; McCloud, 2015). Educators working with these students will benefit from remembering that they are simultaneously learning language and culture. Though language and culture are not the only differences that exist, prior knowledge is a critical component of instruction for ELs (Cho & Reich, 2008; Echeverria et al., 2004). An example would be social studies courses that assume years of instruction in American government and history; EL students in these classes would struggle if educators did not consider their previous exposure to content-specific information about American history (Cho & Reich, 2008). de Jong and Harper (2004) mention components of prior knowledge but equate that with cultural differences. This should likely be separately considered from culture and language, especially in coursework requiring content-specific knowledge. An adapted structure of the framework developed by de Jong and Harper (2005) is represented in Figure 5, with the inclusion of prior knowledge. Therefore, to support ELs and potentially address the performance disparity between them and their peers, instruction and support need to consider student prior knowledge, culture, and language differences.

Figure 5

Adapted Effective Teacher Preparation for Integrated Classrooms



Adapted Effective Teacher Preparation for Integrated Classrooms adds the component of prior knowledge to the framework. (de Jong & Harper, 2005)

The Development of the Educator

A similar survey to the needs assessment survey conducted in this district of 729 educators in a Midwestern suburban districted with an EL and refugee population that had rapidly increased in size, surveyed their educators about the teacher beliefs and attitudes about ELs and second language acquisition (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). The findings indicate that the small group of educators who supported the inclusion of ELs understood the importance of first language proficiency, though many participants were hesitant and concerned about the inclusion of ELs. As a result, the district revised instructional models to incorporate more inclusion opportunities for ELs; a similar effort in this district introduced new instructional models (ESOLToolkit, 2018). The same Midwestern district also developed updated professional development opportunities for educators (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). The professional development focused on strategies designed to support ELs, as well as components of cultural awareness and second language acquisition to address the beliefs of educators. To address the

current disparity in this district, one potential intervention is a professional development series designed to support educators working with ELs in their classrooms.

Professional Development Designed to Support ELs

As Figure 5 indicates, though educators working with ELs need to use strategies that support a diverse classroom, those strategies are not enough to support the needs of ELs alone (de Jong & Harper, 2005). To support the linguistic and cultural differences between ELs and their peers, it is critical to consider prior knowledge, culture, and language. Some argue that the considerations and nuances of culture and prior knowledge must be embedded in all educators' practice with all learners, especially when educators are culturally and linguistically different from their students (Glogger-Frey, Deutscher, & Renkl, 2018; Hewson, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Ogbu, 1992). Moreover, in *Unequal Childhoods* Lareau (2011) identifies differences in the linguistic discourse between families from different socioeconomic backgrounds, highlighting the need to consider prior language experience in instruction. Regardless of these broader implications, these considerations are especially critical for ELs, as many ELs are experiencing the language and culture for the first time and struggle in the academic setting with peers and educators that are linguistically and culturally different (DaSilva Iddings, & Katz, 2007; Hos, 2016; McCloud, 2015). De Jong and Harper (2004; 2004; 2005) asserted that too many educators do not have the professional development and training to consider the specific linguistic and cultural needs of ELs.

There are some programs, like Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), which have associated professional development that recommends specific strategies for educators working with ELs (Echeverria et al., 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Another similar professional development program is Content and Language Integration as a Means of Bridging Success

(CLIMBS®) developed by WIDA to support educators working with ELs (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). CLIMBS® is designed to address ELD, scaffolding, data-driven decision making, and collaboration between ESOL and general educators working with ELs in a school community. Some of the compelling features of the CLIMBS® program is that it has educators working collaboratively in a learning community over an extended period (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Borko, 2004). The strategies specifically designed to support ELs and the collaboration between colleagues is critical. However, those alone during a professional learning experience may not address the needs of the educator.

Transformative Learning

Mezirow (1997) identifies a scheme of pre-conceived notions and expectancies as a frame of reference; this standpoint informs an individual's interpretation of their experiences, development of knowledge, and, at times, rejection of new learning that is contradictory or different. These frames result in general tendencies or biases that impact and filter a person's experiences and influence how they make meaning and are referred to as habits of mind. To change an established frame of reference, an individual must engage in self-reflection that involves analyzing one's own beliefs. This is beyond simple deliberation and is referred to as a critical self-reflection of assumptions. Mezirow (1997, 1998) considers critical reflection that which results in the restructuring of a person's self-identity or questioning of their pre-established schema as a transformative learning experience.

Molle (2013) conducted a microethnography of CLIMBS® which specifically analyzed the discourse between the participants and facilitators. The setting was a mid-sized urban district in the Midwest and included eleven ESOL and general educators. The qualitative findings indicate that professional development only focused on instructional strategies results in an

emphasis on the limitations of ELs and did not address their strengths or unique cultural needs. Though appropriate strategies are critical to the success of the educators working with ELs (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Hos, 2016), that alone may not address the disparity between educators and their peers. A transformative learning experience for educators requires that this discourse leads to critical reflection questioning previous beliefs and pre-conceived notions.

Professional Development Designed to Impact Beliefs

Some pre-conceived notions and beliefs educators hold as they relate to the instruction of ELs are based on misconceptions about second language acquisition (Harper & de Jong, 2004; Marinova-Todd, Marshall, & Snow, 2000; McLaughlin, 1992). A common misconception in working with the families of ELs is to recommend English-only support or English language use at home (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981). This mistake can be detrimental to the families' beliefs about their ability to support their student and the literacy gains of the student. These families often struggle to support their students in a language they do not understand and simultaneously implementing a practice that is not pedagogically sound (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981; Wessels, 2014). Professional development that directly addresses these types of could result in the type of transformative learning; specifically changing a person's schema or current belief system regarding second language acquisition.

Guskey (2002) explains that professional development that leads to teacher change in beliefs often fails to consider what motivates a teacher to engage in learning and how teacher change occurs; arguing that beliefs may only change when new practices are implemented, and teachers change student outcomes as a result. Changing beliefs of educators may also be addressed in some cases through reflective practices like action research, writing in a teaching

journal, and participating in a teacher development group (Farrell, 2008). Helsing et al (2008) completed a case study of a participant in a leadership professional development designed as a transformative learning experience. This professional learning was focused on ensuring participants reflect on the components of an individual that may result in them being resistant to change. The finding indicated that a transformative change occurred when a participant was able to actively reflect on their values and beliefs. This aligns with the transformative learning framework, which indicates self-reflection and reconsideration of current beliefs.

In the case of educators working with ELs, these reflective activities need to actively engage the educators in recognizing their misconceptions and bias that can impact the expectations and beliefs about ELs and second language learning (Inozu, 2011; Molle, 2013; Riley, 2015). Researchers (Abedi, 2007; Cummins, 2011) suggest an understanding of levels of proficiency is critical for classroom practice and often leads to confusion about an EL's ability; these levels are conversational fluency, discrete language skills, and academic language proficiency. Educators must recognize the stages of language development and the necessary scaffolding required for instruction to support EL learning (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001). In the needs assessment, many educators indicated misconceptions about language development and proficiency of ELs.

Professional Development Focused on Neuroeducation

Hardiman (2012) in *Brain-targeted teaching for 21st century schools* tackle the importance of addressing neuromyths, or educators' beliefs about how learning occurs in the brain, counteracting that with the current research in the field of neuroeducation. Introducing the Brain Targeted Teaching (BTT) Model which provides a tool for educators to apply research in their classroom; it serves as a tool to apply neuro and cognitive science into practice. Daniels

(2012) explains that for educators to apply research in neuroscience efficiently, they need specific strategies and procedures. Hammond (2014) purports that when educators are culturally and linguistically different than their students, it is through working with educators to support protocols to improve cognitive operations for processing content. An example of a strategy shared by Hammond (2014) is to ensure content is connected to a student's everyday life to allow students to easily make connections to the content.

A study of educators in a high poverty district in Maryland was designed to investigate whether providing teachers with research-based knowledge from the neuro and cognitive science paired with content specific instruction in how to apply this knowledge in practice would increase both personal and general teaching efficacy and practice (JohnBull, Hardiman, & Rinne, 2013). Though preliminary research on the impact of understanding neuroscience, the findings suggest some teachers felt inadequate to address the effects of poverty on learning, however, some changes in those beliefs were found when the educators were exposed to research on brain development.

Effective Professional Development

Desimone and Garet (2015) identify five key components of professional development which include: (a) content focus; (b) active learning; (c) coherence; (d) sustained duration; and (e) collective participation. Comprehensive reviews of professional development literature done by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) and Avalos (2011) recognize some of those same components, though they also note that the learning should address an educator's beliefs and attitudes. An examination of models of professional development (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002) and teacher change (Guskey, 2002) indicate four outcomes associated with effective professional development which include: (a) modifications to teacher practice; (b) changes in

student learning outcomes; (c) adjustments in student learning processes; and (d) changes in an educator's beliefs or attitudes. Though it is worth noting that Guskey (2002) identifies a linear model resulting in changing an educator's beliefs, in contrast to a cyclical and iterative model outlined by Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) model. Furthermore, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) identify the importance of the school environment, a component missing from Guskey's (2002) model. The intervention proposed in the following section integrates many of the key components outlined in the literature, including a focus on educator's beliefs and attitudes in a collaborative learning atmosphere.

A Potential Intervention

Though discourse can be productive, it could also remain at the level of simple deliberation and may not result in the necessary critical reflection. One compelling way to address the beliefs about the limitations of ELs could be to directly address potential misconceptions about the abilities of ELs and ELD. As stated previously, a needs assessment of educators in this district indicate they have preconceived notions and beliefs, or specific habits of mind, about ELD and potential of ELs that directly contradict research. To address this current disparity one potential intervention is to implement professional development designed to help educators recognize misconceptions and pre-conceived notions they might hold about ELs and their language development together with direct instruction on ELD and scaffolding as depicted in Figure 3. Researchers (Inozu, 2011; Riley, 2015) suggest that actively engaging educators in a way that helps them recognize their misconceptions and bias can impact their pre-existing expectations and beliefs about ELs and language learning. This recognition of their misconceptions could help educators critically reflect on their entire frame of reference; which could result in a changed frame of reference and ultimately a transformative learning experience.

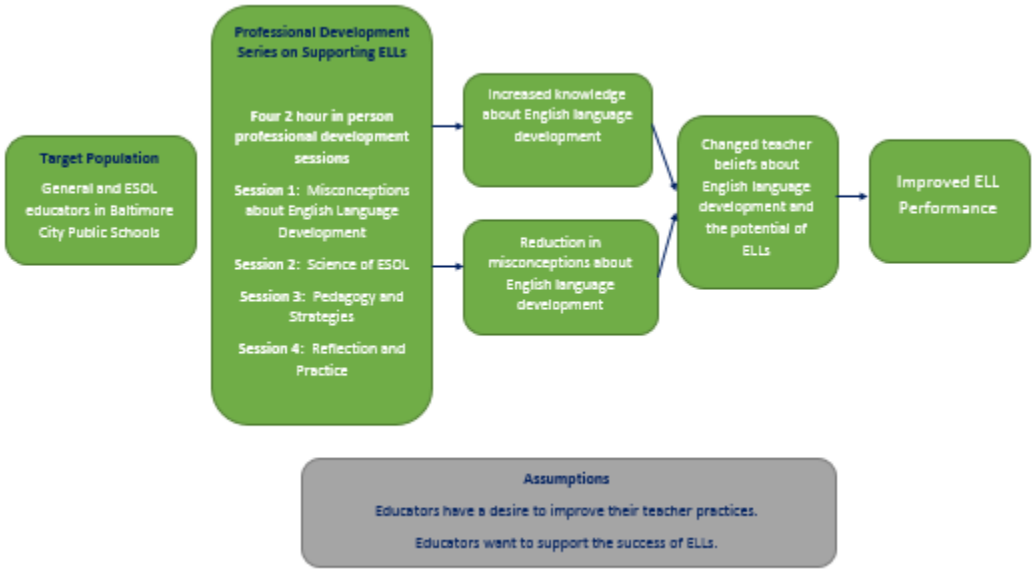
Even though neither the Maryland study or BTT model were designed to specifically address the impact of second language acquisition or changes to the bilingual brain, the lessons from them can provide a basis to intervene with educators working with ELs. Researchers have identified specific improvements to executive function for bilingual individuals (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008), highlighting a potential cognitive benefit to bilingualism. An introduction to these benefits and the cognitive differences between bilinguals and monolinguals may result in the type of changed frames of reference recognized by Mezirow (1997). By addressing bilingual cognition and including learning on misconceptions or babout ELD and instructional strategies designed to support ELs, educators may experience a transformative learning experience. One potential structure for this learning can be a professional development series, consisting of four in-person two-hour sessions organized into the following topics: (a) misconceptions about ELD and ELs; (b) science of ESOL; (c) pedagogy and strategies, and (d) reflection and practice.

Theory of Change

Figure 6 identifies a theory of change, which will identify how to improve the instructional core. The theory of change is that if educators of ELs are exposed to this professional development, then it will improve their knowledge of ELD and decrease their misconceptions about language learning and ELs. As indicated in Figure 6, the professional development series is designed to address an educator's knowledge of ELD and their misconceptions about ELD and ELs. These changes will result in changed educator beliefs about ELD and the potential of ELs. These changed beliefs could also ultimately impact student outcomes.

Figure 6

Theory of Change



The theory of change is that if educators of ELs are exposed to this professional development, then their knowledge of ELD will improve and their misconceptions about language learning and ELs will decrease.

The professional development series consisted of four in-person two-hour sessions over four weeks. The series will be designed to support ELs in the classroom by developing knowledge of ELD and addressing common misconceptions and beliefs about ELs. Though the series will also include strategies to support ELs, addressing only strategies would miss the complexity of needs required to support linguistically diverse students (Molle, 2013) as described previously. The four sessions were organized into the following topics: (a) misconceptions about ELD and ELs; (b) science of ESOL; (c) pedagogy and strategies; and (d) reflection and practice. The first session, addressing misconceptions about ELD, will be designed to help educators recognize potential misconceptions and pre-conceived notions they might hold about ELs and their language development. Professional development and instruction for

educators working with language learners need to actively engage the educators in recognizing their misconceptions and bias that can impact the expectations and beliefs about ELs and language learning (Inozu, 2011; Molle, 2013; Riley, 2015).

The second session, addressing the science of ESOL, focused on the components of ELD. It will mainly address the three components of language proficiency which are conversational fluency, discrete language skills, and academic language proficiency (Abedi, 2007; Cummins, 2011; Molle, 2013). Researchers (Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011) describe conversational fluency as the ability to engage in dialogue. Discrete language skills are the grammatical, literacy, and phonological knowledge needs for conversation. The final category, which is the most difficult to obtain, is academic language proficiency (Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011). The educator must recognize the stages of language development and the necessary scaffolding required for instruction (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001).

The third session, addressing pedagogy and strategies, tackled specific protocols for supporting ELs in the classroom. This session will focus on best practices and strategies educators need to utilize when working with ELs in the areas of language, culture, and prior knowledge. The session will help educators recognize the language component of standards or the language necessary to access the content, often overlooked in the instruction of ELs (Callahan 2005) and professional development of educators (Echeverria et al., 2008). It will also address culturally responsive practices that include considering their students' background in the development of lessons and support (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Finally, the lesson will discuss the importance of considering the prior knowledge of an EL when providing language and content instruction (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Echeverria et al., 2008; Meidl & Meidl, 2011; Molle, 2013; Short & Echevarria, 2004). Language differences, cultural

diversity, and prior knowledge are critical areas for educators to recognize when working with ELs (Markos & Himmel, 2016).

The fourth and final session, addressing reflection and practice, focused on the application of all three previous sessions in the professional practice of each of the participants. Following sessions two and three, educators will have opportunities to practice their learning within their own context. Session four will provide an opportunity to reflect on this practice, which is critical to the success of any professional development (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). This session will also provide an opportunity to actively apply their learning to future lesson plan development and investigate coherence with other learning opportunities, another key attribute of successful professional development (Garet et al, 2001).

Conclusion

This literature review begins by identifying the concerns in performance between ELs and their peers, as measured by both NAEP and PARCC results (Anonymous, 2017; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). This performance gap was amplified by the rapid rise in number of ELs in this district (Anonymous, 2017; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). A potential intervention, a professional development series, was identified to support this performance gap. The professional development was guided by the sociocultural perspective and designed as a transformative learning experience for both ESOL and general educators.

Chapter 4 – Intervention

Introduction

The needs assessment of this district's educators may reflect a finding from the research literature in that educators who are culturally and linguistically diverse from their students might have limited expectations about their potential and inaccurate beliefs about language acquisition (Reeves, 2006; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). This could be an associated factor for the current performance gap between ELs and their peers. As discussed in Chapter 3, one potential intervention to address this current disparity is a professional development series designed to support educators working with ELs in their classrooms. The professional development series consisted of four in-person two-hour sessions organized into the following topics: (1) misconceptions about ELD and ELs; (2) science of ESOL; (3) pedagogy and strategies; and (4) reflection and practice.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a professional development series on the changes in knowledge and misconceptions of ELD and supports for ELs. The hypothesis was that a paired sample t-tests and analysis of interviews would show an increase in beliefs and a decrease in misconceptions about ELD and supports for ELs as measured by changes in responses on a pre-and post-survey measuring common misconceptions about language learning for ESOL and general educators. The research questions addressed both process and outcome evaluations:

Outcome Evaluation Questions:

- RQ1: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators?
- RQ1A: How was this change in knowledge moderated by a participant's background?

- RQ2: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to misconceptions of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators?
- RQ2A: How was this change in misconceptions moderated by a participant's background?

Process Evaluation Questions:

- RQ3: Were the ESOL and general educators satisfied and engaged in all four sessions of the professional development series?
- RQ4: How many of the ESOL and general educators attended each of the four sessions of the professional development series?
- RQ4A: How was the attendance moderated by a participant's background?
- RQ5: Were all four sessions of the professional development series delivered as intended?
- RQ6: Did the current political climate impact the responses of the ESOL and general educators?

The outcome and process evaluations of these questions were based on a mixed methods approach to assessing the fidelity of implementation and proximal outcomes of this intervention.

Research Design

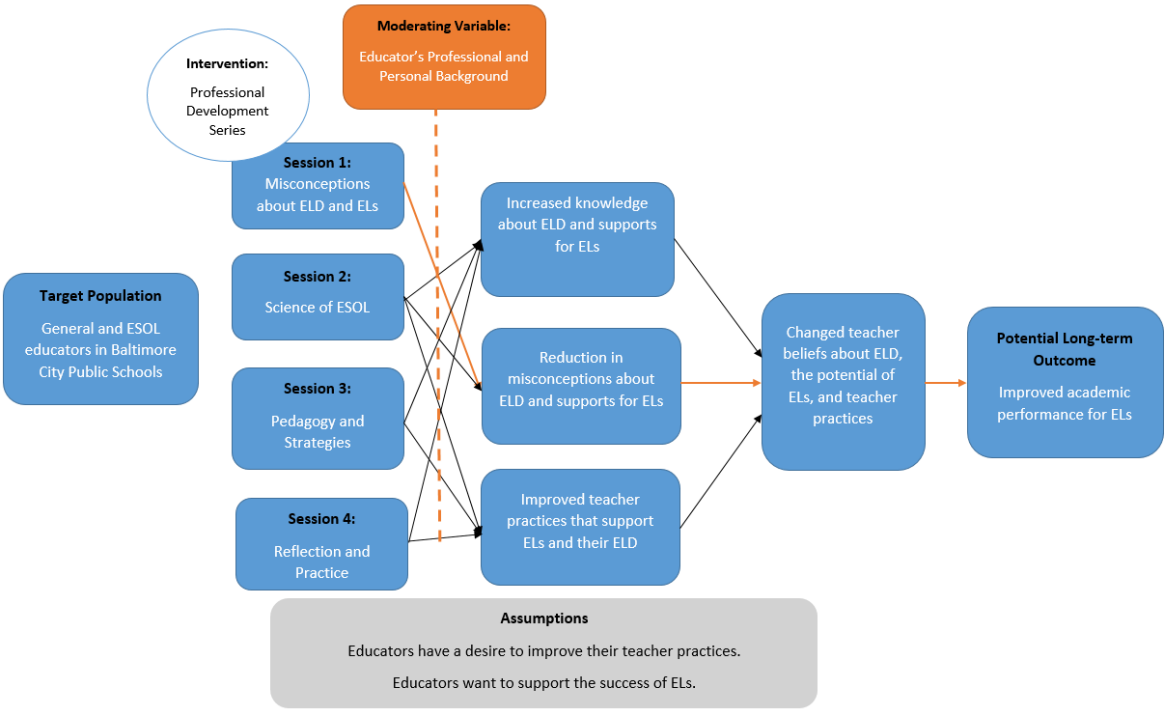
The explanatory sequential design will be utilized for the evaluation of the impact of this professional development series, which includes a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. The intervention was a professional development series that is designed to support ELs in the classroom by developing knowledge of ELD and addressing common misconceptions and beliefs about ELD and ELs (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Decapua & Marshall, 2010; Hos, 2016; Inozu, 2011; Molle, 2013; Riley, 2015). The Logic Model (LM) for this intervention indicates the ESOL and general educators comprised one cohort of 9 educators who met after school hours in the district building. The series consisted of four in-person two-hour sessions, totaling eight

hours of professional learning. Due to union requirements, staff received stipends, which were $30.00 per hour plus 7.65% FICA, totaling $258.36 per participant. Each session was facilitated by the researcher. The room had a projector, screen, and space for collaborative activities. The deliverable was four, two-hour sessions, organized into the following topics: (1) misconceptions about ELD and ELs; (2) science of ESOL; (3) pedagogy and strategies; and, (4) reflection and practice. The goals of the professional development series were designed to address an educator's knowledge of ELD and their misconceptions about ELD and ELs, and teacher practice. Student achievement was not examined in this research study; though this is a proposed long-term outcome. The Logic Model is represented in Appendix B; the evaluation of the intervention was based on both outcome and process indicators.

Leviton and Lipsey (2007) argue for the importance of a Theory of Treatment (TOT) by clarifying its role in establishing causation patterns. The TOT is expected to identify "specific variables and their causal influences on one another" (Leviton & Lipsey, 2007, p. 38). Though it was critical to provide support to educators by providing professional development designed to improve instruction and strategies for working with ELs (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Hos, 2016), this alone may not have addressed the misconceptions or inaccurate knowledge related to ELD and supports for ELs. Mezirow (1997, 1998) considers critical reflection that results in the restructuring of a person's self-identity, or questioning of her pre-established schema, as a transformative learning experience. The TOT for this intervention is found in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Theory of Treatment



This Theory of Treatment is a causal diagram that describes how the professional development series impacts short-term outcomes, the moderating variable of an educator's background, and the potential relationship to medium and long-term outcomes.

The desired outcomes were defined as precisely as possible with considerations for how various subjects responded, and, specifically, "what intervening or mediating variables are critical" (Leviton & Lipsey, 2007, p. 33). This TOT causal diagram identified how each session of a four-part professional development series directly impacted short-term outcomes. The TOT diagram identified an educator's professional and personal background as a moderating variable that could impact the changes in knowledge and misconceptions.

Outcome Evaluation Plan

An outcome evaluation plan is designed to evaluate the causal processes related to the intervention and associated outcomes. The outcome evaluation design for this study was based

on an explanatory sequential design (also known as explanatory design) which was implemented utilizing a mixed methods approach that incorporated a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodology (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Figure 7 is a prototypical version of the explanatory design which includes two discrete phases beginning with a quantitative phase and followed by a qualitative phase designed to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The quantitative measures of the evaluation consisted of a pre and post-survey. The survey primarily consisted of questions from a survey tool developed and validated by Reeves (2002; 2006) in a quantitative study of mainstream secondary teachers' beliefs about the inclusion of ELs. This was the same tool utilized during the needs assessment. The qualitative component was an interview with select participants to understand their responses to questionnaires and potential changes to beliefs, session dialogue, and participant developed products such as posters.

Figure 8

Adapted Explanatory Sequential Design

Adapted from Explanatory Sequential Design by Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Creswell and Clark (2007) identify explanatory design as one of "the most straightforward of the mixed methods designs" (p. 83). This design begins with a distinct quantitative component, allowing it to benefit from the strengths of a quantitative design and qualitative design separately. These strengths include a greater ability to establish the causality between the intervention and the changes seen in the post-test during the quantitative phase

(Shadish et al., 2002), and explanation of those results and the why during the interviews of the qualitative phase (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). The two stages make the analysis of the intervention uncomplicated to execute and examine (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The separate stages provide an opportunity to apply the learning from the quantitative phase to the planning and implementation of the qualitative phase. Overall this simple two stage approach provides an opportunity to delineate the implementation and analysis and benefit from the mixed methods approach. Even with the straightforward approach, the explanatory design still faces challenges. This design requires that the quantitative portion be completed and analyzed before the start of the qualitative phase; which can result in this model taking longer than other mixed methods approaches (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Effect Size

Effect size is a way to enumerate the variance between two groups (Coe, 2002) and provides an opportunity to understand the degree of impact of the intervention (Salkind, 2016). Effect size can be measured for the short or medium-term changes in beliefs and perceived knowledge or the long-term impact on student achievement. Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is an instructional planning model with an associated professional development that coaches teachers on specific strategies for working with ELLs (Short, Echevarría, & Richards-Tutor, 2011; Short, Fidelman, & Louguit, 2012). The effect size of SIOP on student achievement as measured by language proficiency assessments was 0.23. Another study of an intervention designed to address teacher efficacy in four sessions over two months resulted in an effect size ranging from 0.61 to 0.87 on math achievement (Rubie-Davies & Rosenthal, 2016). Reviewing the effect size of these two studies this intervention could potentially have a medium effect size of around 0.4 on student achievement, which would require a sample size of 156.

Analyzing comparable studies measuring the impact of the short and medium-term outcomes in this professional development series results in slightly different effect size. A study of professional development focused on inclusion for students with disabilities which constituted 27 hours of learning over nine weeks had an effect size of 0.98 (Royster, Reglin, & Losike-Sedimo, 2014). Another local professional development series conducted in an urban center in Maryland with 30 hours of learning focused Brain-Targeted Teaching had large effect size on personal and professional efficacy ranging from 1.42 to 1.14 (JohnBull, Hardiman, & Rinne, 2013). The professional development series in this study currently requires less time spent in session than the other identified studies. As a result, the expectations could be a lower effect size than identified by these longer associates studies. The potential effect size could be 0.80 for changing beliefs, which would require a sample size of 42, which is close to the identified sample size for this study. Due to space limitations, the sample population will be limited to 40 participants; it may however be advisable to consider more or longer sessions to extend the duration of the series. As identified in the analysis of effect size, that population will need to range from 42-156, which is not possible in this experiment. However, the qualitative component will allow the analysis to evaluate causality by questioning participants about changes in perceived knowledge and misconceptions and could mitigate the smaller sample size.

Process Evaluation

Process evaluation plan provides an opportunity to ensure the professional development series was implemented and intervened as intended (Dusenbury et al., 2003; Linnan & Steckler, 2002). The process evaluation plan comprised of six indicators that guided the analysis of the implementation and reception of the professional learning. Those indicators were participant satisfaction, number of participants, participant attendance, methods of outreach, delivery of

professional development series, and impact of political climate and are identified in the Summary Data Matrix in Appendix C.

The LM indicates the participation of 9 ESOL and general educators in four sessions and as indicated in the TOT, for participants to change beliefs there must be a critical reflection. Critical reflection required participants to engage in the process actively. The measure of this was based on interview questions about their experience during the learning series and whether they would recommend it to other participants.

As identified in the LM, the target audience for this intervention is ESOL and general educators in this district. However, due to space limitations, the sample population was limited to 40 participants, with 23 participants recruited. The 9 ESOL and general educators who completed consent forms. Attendance was measured during session to determine the overall attendance rate at each session and by participant to identify which sessions individuals specifically missed. The recruitment methods were evaluated based on the facilitator's correspondences and records prior to the start of the professional development series. These correspondences and records included recruitment emails and the description from the professional development system.

The LM specified the delivery of four two-hour sessions; each focused on different components. The TOT indicated that certain components of the professional development series would lead to specific outcomes. As a result, it is essential that those components delivered. An observer with an understanding of the professional learning series components observed and took notes during each session. This professional learning series identified in the LM was designed to impact the beliefs of educators working with ELs to determine if it could lead to the critical reflection required to change beliefs as described in the TOT. The change in beliefs were

measured by the pre-and post-survey results and triangulated with interviews conducted at the end of the professional development series by the facilitator.

Method

Participants

In the literature and research concerning ELs, a considerable focus has been placed on the professional development of general educators supporting ELs (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2011; Echeverria et al., 2008; Meidl & Meidl, 2011) and evaluating the beliefs and expectations of these general educators supporting ELs (Reeves, 2006; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). However, the needs assessment and research on beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse students indicates ESOL teachers have some of the same preconceived beliefs about language acquisition and low expectations of ELs (Reeves, 2009; Terrill & Mark, 2000), even though they should be the experts who support the unique linguistic needs of ELs (Sehlaoui & Shinge, 2013). Therefore, this professional development targeted both general and ESOL educators.

The participants were educators in this district supporting ELs who included ESOL teachers and general education teachers. Participants were recruited through an open enrollment process. The offer was shared through a system in this district that is utilized to distribute and enroll in district professional development opportunities. It was also shared directly with ESOL educators through an email; the message encouraged them to share the link with other staff, including administrators and general educators, in their schools. An example of the recruitment script is in Appendix D. Members of the leadership team within the district office were encouraged to share with their points of contacts in schools. For instance, a science coordinator shared with all science educators. Finally, the opportunity was shared directly with all administrators and educators through the district update and newsletters.

Measures

The analysis of these variables included both qualitative and quantitative measures. The quantitative measures consisted of participation indicators and a pre and post-survey. The qualitative component was an interview with select participants to understand their responses to questionnaires and potential changes to beliefs. The survey primarily consisted of questions from a survey tool developed and validated by Reeves (2002, 2006) in a quantitative study of mainstream secondary teachers' beliefs about the inclusion of ELs.

Instrumentation

The pre and post-surveys provided a chance to explore specific beliefs and potential discrepancies in those beliefs, with explicit connections to the educators' background and previous experiences including professional development and learning. The survey primarily consisted of questions developed by Reeves (2002, 2006) which served as the basis of a needs assessment previously conducted in this district. The seventy-one questions focused on assessing an educator's background, current role, beliefs about the inclusion of ELs, and their cultural and linguistic knowledge specifically using Likert and frequency scale questions to identify potential misconceptions or preconceived notions or their manifestation. The questions specifically addressed knowledge of language learning with statements like "English learners should avoid using their native language in school."

The original Reeves (2002, 2006) survey was conducted with 279 secondary educators in a mid-sized Southeastern city with a low incidence and rapidly growing population of ELs. This district had seen a similar pattern of growth, with an increase in the population of ELs over the past six years by 40% at the elementary level and 120% at the secondary level (Anonymous, 2017). Reeves (2002, 2006) developed the survey due to the lack of existing survey tools related

to beliefs about ELs. It was designed to focus on six topics identified as challenges and perceptions of educators working with ELs. Each topic had multiple questions associated with it. The six themes explored were beliefs and expectations related to: (1) time, (2) course modification, (3) language acquisition, (4) educational environment, (5) professional development, and (5) general attitude toward inclusion of ELs. Once developed the tool was piloted with 30 middle school educators with the intention of verifying the clarity of the tool; a feedback form accompanied it. The feedback did not yield significant changes to the survey.

The Reeves (2002, 2006) investigation operated as the basis for the survey developed for the needs assessment conducted with 110 educators. The data collection tool was an anonymous online survey composed of assorted types of questions, including dichotomous, multiple choice, Likert scale, frequency, and open-ended. The 71 items focused on assessing an educator's background, current role, beliefs about the inclusion of ELs, and their cultural and linguistic knowledge. It was reviewed prior to release by experts in the field of ESOL and educators to ensure consistency and continuity. These review cycles and previous iterations of the assessment assessed the validity of the measure, and the review and development by experts addressed the validity, specifically face validity.

Measuring Variables

The independent variable was the professional development series designed for educators working with ELs. The measurement of this variable was based on attendance and participation. The measures of attendance were duration and session participation (Ingvarson, Meiers, & Beavis, 2005). Time in professional development was not the only important factor; however it can be an important condition (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Duration was the measure of the number of total hours spent in professional learning and session participation was

be quantified by the number of sessions attended. This was a simple measure of attendance, and therefore, reliable in the sense that it is easily repeatable and not subject to bias (Gibbs, 2012). Duration and session participation are valid measures of attendance, as far as they directly measure their participation in the sessions. Satisfaction and the number of participants were also included in the evaluation, which was considered a part of the process evaluation.

The mediating variable in this analysis was an educator's background, which included measures of their personal and professional experiences as shared in the pre- and post-surveys. The measures of personal background consisted of educators' self-reported proficiency in languages other than English and their out of country experiences. A specific question included 'do you speak another language' followed by indicators of proficiency of that language (Reeves, 2002; 2006). Another question was 'have you ever lived (for more than two months) in another country?'. The measures of professional background included years of teaching, certification pathway, and past professional development designed to support ELs. The specific questions included 'have you ever received training or professional development in supporting English learners?' (Reeves, 2002; 2006) and 'have you ever taken a course in linguistics?'.

The two independent variables: knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs and misconceptions about ELD and ELS were measured by both surveys and interviews. The evaluation of these independent variables included specific measures of common misconceptions related to language learning. These were statements about language development and acquisition that were measured on a four-point Likert-type scale with options for 'strongly agree,' 'agree,' 'disagree,' and 'strongly disagree.' One example was how long it takes to become proficient in a new language as measured by a statement like 'ELs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools' (Reeves, 2002; Reeves, 2006). This is contrary to the research

indicating it will likely take between five to seven years to become fully proficient in English (Cummins, 1979; Cummins, 2011). Another was the belief that the parents of ELs should utilize English as much as possible at home, represented by a statement such as 'Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible' (Reeves, 2002; Reeves, 2006). The research has established that this practice has a detrimental impact on student progress and that educators should instead encourage native language usage at home (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981). The interview questions included guided questions designed to understand why educators hold certain beliefs (Reeves, 2002) or why they made certain instructional decisions about ELs (Riley, 2015) and how those changed as a result of the implementation of the intervention. The interview questions associated with outcome evaluation were:

1. This professional development series contained four sessions organized into the following topics: (a) conceptions about ELD and ELs; (b) science of ESOL; (c) pedagogy and strategies, and (d) reflection and practice.
    a. Which of the sessions did you find most helpful and why?
    b. Which components of the series did you find most engaging and why?
    c. Which components were particularly helpful?
2. In reviewing your survey, I noticed a change in [insert change from data analysis]. How do you feel the topics or activities in the professional development series impacted change for you? [repeat as needed]
3. In reviewing your survey, I noticed a change in [insert change from qualitative questions]. How do you feel the topics or activities in the professional development series impacted change for you? [repeat as needed]

4. I noticed something interesting that I wanted to ask you about, your post-survey which was 29 questions shorter, however you took more time to respond to the post-survey? Even though I assumed it would take less time, I am so interested in your thought process as you reviewed your questions.

The questions associated with the process evaluation were:

5. Why did you choose to participate in this professional development series designed to support English Learners?
6. How likely would you be to recommend this series to other educators? Which types of educators do you believe would benefit from this professional development?

Procedure

The process evaluation plan was developed to measure the execution of the intervention and the receptiveness by the participants (Dusenbury et al., 2003; Linnan & Steckler, 2002). It was designed with specific indicators that measure the components of reach, implementation of program, context, and participant responsiveness. Careful process evaluation ensured that the findings of an intervention could be linked to the components of that intervention. The explanatory sequential design was utilized for the evaluation of the impact of this professional development series. This mixed methods approach allowed particular concerns associated with the sample size, selection, and duration to be mitigated as changes in knowledge and misconceptions were evaluated through interviews to inform and confirm conclusions.

Intervention

The intervention was a professional learning series outlined in the LM in Appendix B was designed to impact knowledge and misconceptions. The first session, addressing misconceptions about ELD and ELs, was intended to help educators recognize potential

misconceptions and pre-conceived notions (Reeves, 2006; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001) they might hold about ELs and their language development. The second session was meant to help participants understand the science of ESOL, addressing the components of ELD (Abedi, 2007; Bailey & Huang, 2011; Cummins, 2011) and the benefits of bilingualism (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008).

The third session, addressing pedagogy and strategies, was designed to tackle specific protocols for supporting ELs in the classroom. It was focused on best practices and strategies educators should utilize when working with ELs in the areas of language, culture, and prior knowledge (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Echeverria et al., 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1995). The fourth and final session, allowed time for reflection and practice, and focused on the application of all three previous sessions in the professional practice of each of the participants to provide an opportunity to apply the knowledge in the context (Garet et al, 2001; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). This fourth session also provided the opportunity to ensure all content from session three was shared with participants.

Data Collection

This development series entailed four two-hour sessions. Each session was designed to improve the participants' pedagogical content knowledge related to the specific topic. It was implemented over the course of two months during the winter of 2019. The protocols for data collection and analysis were summarized in the Summary Data Matrix represented in Appendix C.

The facilitator took the lead on providing and collecting all the process evaluation data sources including attendance sheets and pre- and post-survey. During the first session prior to the start of the professional development series, participants were asked to complete consent forms

by an observer who also took the session observation notes. At the conclusion of the session and after initial evaluation of the quantitative data, the interviews were conducted by the facilitator.

Data Analysis

The quantitative component of the study utilized a quasi-experimental design because the selection of participants was not random (Shadish et al., 2002). The specific quasi-experimental design was a one group pre and post-test design as identified in Appendix C. A paired sample t-test was conducted to analyze the replies of specific response groups (Sprinthall, 1997). The Alpha level was set at 0.10 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test. Key information was obtained about participant background, current role, and specific knowledge and beliefs and was to be reviewed to determine trends and compare results between participants.

A quantitative analysis alone can indicate the association between variables and how the dependent variable impacts the independent variable but cannot explain why the relationship exists (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Considerations were made to determine the impact of an educator's background on these beliefs. This included comparting educators based on their cultural and linguistic experiences and determining how that impacted their pre and post-test responses. An accompanying qualitative analysis provided a dimension to the analysis that can potentially identify why the change or impact occurs (Creswell & Clark, 2007). This was accomplished through educator interviews. The evaluation of beliefs is a complicated phenomenon (Pajares, 1992). Mixed methods provide an opportunity to fully understand the various components that can impact an educator's beliefs (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). The data obtained from interviews was evaluated using narrative analysis, in an effort to understand the survey responses of participants (Schutt, 2015).

Data on the educator's professional background, collected during the pre-survey, operated as a mediating variable. The changes in knowledge of ELD and associated supports for ELs and their misconceptions about language learning and ELs were measured through an analysis of differences in pre and post-survey results. Instances of changes to pre and post-survey responses to prompts like "English learners should avoid using their native language in school". These prompts are represented in categories of language acquisition, educational environment, and general attitude twoard inclusion of ELs. The researcher created a changes table to identify salient changes by individual participants that may not be reflected in the paired t-test results. Changes in knowledge, misconception, and supports for ELs were evaluated during the interview.

Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) defined one type of validity as the consideration of whether at the conclusion of the study there is an inference that the treatment caused the effect. They noted the importance of considering threats to validity prior to beginning an experiment. Statistical conclusion validity considers whether there is covariance between the cause and effect, and the strength of that variance. The sample size was limited by interest in participating, size of the room, and limitations of one facilitator. However, the qualitative component allowed the analysis to evaluate causality by questioning participants about changes in knowledge and misconceptions and could mitigate the smaller sample size.

Internal validity reflects whether the variation between cause and effect is actually due to a causal relationship and depends on three factors: (a) cause preceding effect; (b) cause and effect covary; and (c) elimination of other potential causes (Shadish et al., 2002). Selection bias was a potential challenge as those who select to participate in the professional learning may be those that who already have a desire to change their practice, which would be different from

those who do not have that desire. Though a survey of educators reflects a similar finding from the research literature that those with common misconceptions about language learners and inclusion still desire professional learning to improve their practice (Reeves, 2006). Construct validity demonstrates whether the constructs identified are appropriately represented, defined, and measured. The survey tool had multiple items per construct that are associated with it which helped to support the validity of it as a measure. External validity exposes whether the causal relationship established between the intervention and effect is generalizable in another context. In this study, the sample population volunteered. As mentioned previously, this willingness to improve practice could impact the generalizability to a sample of educators not necessarily volunteering to improve their practice.

The researcher's advisor acted as a peer reviewer to support the validity of the analysis. Researcher positionality, including a researchers cultural and racial background, can impact research if it is not considered and accounted for by the researcher (Milner, 2007). This researcher is the child of immigrants and English was the third language they learned as a child. Though this background could impact their perspective, the considerations for validity and peer reviewer mitigate this potential impact.

Conclusion

Leviton and Lipsey (2007) argue for the importance of a TOT by clarifying its role in establishing causation patterns. The TOT is expected to identify "specific variables and their causal influences on one another" (Leviton & Lipsey, 2007, p. 38). Though it is critical to provide support to educators by providing professional development designed to improve instruction and strategies for working with ELs (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Hos, 2016), this alone may not change their beliefs. Mezirow (1997, 1998) considers critical reflection that

results in the restructuring of a person's self-identity, or questioning of her pre-established schema, as a transformative learning experience. The desired outcomes were defined as precisely as possible with considerations for how various subjects responded, and, specifically, "what intervening or mediating variables are critical" (Leviton & Lipsey, 2007, p. 33). Once defined, the measures are critical to ensuring the causation predictions implied in the hypothesis statement are indicated by the outcomes. The design of the this intervetion and the associated analysis provide an opportunity to consider the impact of professional development designed to engage educators in crititical reflection.

Chapter 5 – Findings and Discussion

Introduction

A professional development series designed to impact knowledge and misconceptions was conducted in the 2018-2019 academic year. A detailed explanation of the mixed methods evaluation study conducted on the impact of this professional development series will be provided in this chapter. Additionally, an overview of the process evaluation designed to measure the fidelity of the intervention will be presented. A discussion of the relevant literature and the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapters One and Three will be included. The chapter will conclude identifying limitations of the study and implications for both educational practice and future research.

Process of Implementation

The professional development series consisted of four, two-hour sessions, organized into the following topics: (1) misconceptions about English Language Development (ELD) and English Learners (ELs); (2) science of ESOL; (3) pedagogy and strategies; and, (4) reflection and practice. The sessions were open to all educators, the participants included 2 general educators and 7 ESOL educators. These sessions were held weekly and led by the researcher. During the initial segment of the first session all participants were asked to complete the consent and pre-survey. Each session was organized into four components which began with an informational section, followed by a video, group activity, and reflective task. The final session concluded with participants completing the post-survey.

Evaluation of Program

The outcome and process evaluations of the intervention were based on a mixed methods approach designed to assess the fidelity of implementation and proximal outcomes of this

intervention. The outcome evaluation plan for this study was an explanatory design. The quantitative component was an assessment of the pre and post-survey results. The qualitative component included an evaluation of the in-session conversations, participant products, and interviews. All nine of the participants completed pre and post-surveys, while seven agreed to participate in a follow up interview.

Findings

The outcome and process evaluation are delineated and considered by research question. In alignment with an explanatory study, the outcome evaluation began with a quantitative analysis of the findings, specifically a paired t-test and analysis of survey duration. The second part of the outcome evaluation consisted of a qualitative analysis to explain the quantitative findings, specifically the changed responses, interview replies, and general observations. The process evaluation questions were answered using mixed methods to examine factors such as participant feedback, attendance, and delivery indicators.

Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation will be completed by answering the two research questions and their sub-questions.

Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis had two parts. The first being a paired t-test, while the second a comparison of time per question.

Paired t-test. Paired sample t-tests were utilized to compare pre and post-survey results of participants. The results will be evaluated by question.

RQ1: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators? The results of the

paired t-test for statistically and approaching statistically significant changes can be found in Table 5. As mentioned in Chapter Four because the researcher designed an explanatory analysis, she set the Alpha level to 0.10 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test. Based on that Alpha level, findings indicate a significant change in responses for four survey prompts addressing knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs. One question related to knowledge of ELD that indicate a significant difference in responses between the pre and post-survey. That prompt was: 'Understanding the cultural background of an English learner is essential for their success' (*M*pre =3.67, *M*post = 4.00, *t* = 2.00, p = 0.08). The participants' responses about understanding cultural background of a student changed toward agreement. This means that participants agreed more with the idea that understanding a student's cultural background is essential to their success. Three questions identifying supports for ELs showed significant difference. Those questions were 'General/subject education teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of English learners' (*M*pre = 2.33, *M*post = 1.89, *t* = -2.53, p = 0.04), 'I give English learners less coursework than other students' (*M*pre = 2.78, *M*post = 2.00, *t* = -2.80, p = 0.023), and 'ESOL teachers and General Educators plan together' (*M*pre = 1.89, *M*post = 2.33, *t* = 2.53, p = 0.04). The participants' responses related to the time general educators have to support ELs responses changed toward disagreement. Participants were more likely to believe general educators do have time to support ELs in their classroom. The responses to the prompt about giving ELs less coursework than their peers changed to less frequently. This means participants were more likely to believe general educators do have time to support ELs in their classroom. The prompt's responses about ESOL and general educators planning together changed to more frequently, meaning educators were more likely to plan together. One additional prompt related to identifying supports for ELs is worth noting because it approached significance. The prompt

was: 'I think its important to consider English learners cultural background when preparing lessons and assessments' (*M*pre = 3.44, *M*post = 3.89, *t* = 1.84, p = 0.10). The prompt's responses about considering an ELs cultural background when preparing curricular materials changed toward agreement. Participants indicate they are considering their student's culture more when preparing instructional materials. These quantitative findings indicate eight survey prompts were significant or approaching significance related to changes in the knowledge of the participants. Participants were questioned about changes related to these eight survey prompts during interviews.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations in Pre and Post-Survey Results Related to Knowledge

	Pre-Survey Mean	Post-Survey Mean	Change in Mean (Post-Pre)	SD	90% Confidence Interval of the Difference		*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Understanding the cultural background of an English learner is essential for their success.	3.67	4.00	0.33	0.50	0.02	0.64	2.00	0.08*
General/subject education teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of English learners.	2.33	1.89	-0.44	0.53	-0.77	-0.12	-2.53	0.04**
I give English learners less coursework than other students.	2.78	2.00	-0.78	0.83	-1.29	-0.26	-2.80	0.02**
ESOL staff and general/subject staff co-plan together.	1.89	2.33	0.44	0.53	0.12	0.77	2.53	0.04**

I think its important to consider English learners cultural background when preparing lessons and assessments.	3.44	3.89	0.44	0.73	-0.01	0.90	1.84	0.10

* For Alpha level set at 0.10 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test.
**For Alpha level set at 0.05 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test.

RQ2: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to misconceptions of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators? Paired sample t-tests found in Table 6 were applied to evaluate pre and post-survey outcomes. As mentioned, the Alpha level is set to 0.10 to capture potential significance and utilizing this level, findings indicate a significant change in responses for two survey questions identifying common misconceptions related to ELD and supports provided to ELs. The two indicators were: 'Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible' (*M*pre = 2.22, *M*post = 1.89, *t* = -2.00, p = 0.08) and 'English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools' (*M*pre = 1.78, *M*post = 1.11, *t* = -2.83, p = 0.02). One additional prompt related to misconceptions is approaching significance, which is: 'Retaining English learners can be effective if they are not progressing in their language proficiency' (*M*pre = 2.11, *M*post = 1.67, t = -1.84, p = 0.10). The responses to these three prompts changed in the direction of disagreement. This means that participants disagreed with the belief that ELs can learn English in two years and parents of ELs should utilize English as often as possible. Additionally, participants did not believe retention was an effective support for ELs not progressing linguistically. These results indicate three survey prompts with significant or approaching significant changes. Participants were questioned about these changes during interviews.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations in Pre and Post-Survey Results Related to Misconceptions

	Pre-Survey Mean	Post-Survey Mean	Change in Mean (Post-Pre)	SD	90% Confidence Interval of the Difference		*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible.	2.22	1.89	-0.33	0.50	-0.64	-0.02	-2.00	0.08*
English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.	1.78	1.11	-0.67	0.71	-1.11	-0.23	-2.83	0.02**
Retaining English learners can be effective if they are not progressing in their language proficiency.	2.11	1.67	-0.44	0.73	0.90	-0.01	-1.84	0.10

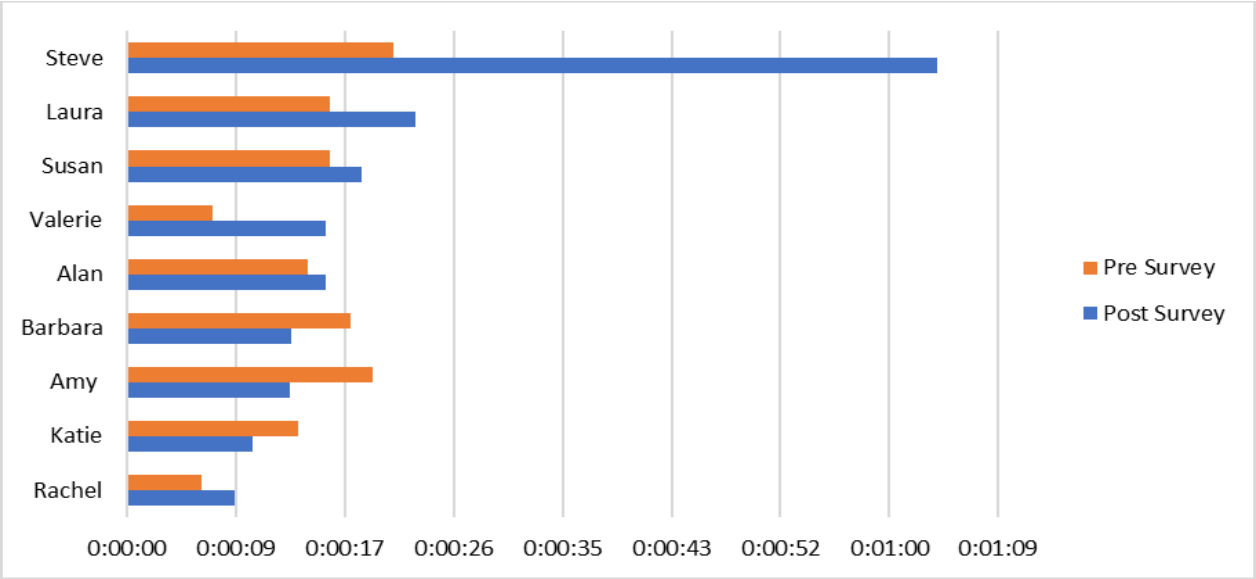
* For Alpha level set at 0.10 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test.
**For Alpha level set at 0.05 to capture potential significance using the two-tailed test.

Time Change. Another quantitative result worth noting is the change in time it took to respond to the questions in the survey, as indicated in Figure 9. As described in Chapter Four, the pre and post survey prompts are exactly the same; the pre-survey does include background questions that the post-survey does not. The table identifies the average time per question for each participant on the pre-survey compared to the post-survey. The average time per question on the pre-survey was 15 seconds versus 20 seconds on the post-survey. This difference is based on the increase for six of the nine participants whose average response time per question increased on the post survey. Steve had a dramatic change resulting in the questions on his post-survey taking on average 43 seconds longer than on the pre-survey. It is important to note that if you remove Steve, the average time per question on the pre-survey was 14 seconds versus 15

seconds on the post-survey. Additionally, the range of the average time per question on the pre-survey was from six seconds to 21 seconds and on the post-survey the range was from nine seconds to one minute and four seconds. Without Steve this range on the pre-survey was from six seconds to 19 seconds and on the post-survey the range was from nine seconds to 23 seconds.

Figure 9

Average Response Time Per Question on Pre-Survey and Post-Survey



Average Response Time Per Question on Pre-Survey and Post-Survey for each of the survey participants

The background questions in the pre-survey were short questions related to the participants' personal and professional background. Examples include 'How many years have you been in education?' or 'Are you fluent in another language?'. Based on the simplicity of the pre-survey background questions, the 5 second difference in response time on post versus pre-survey could be an indication that participants were more reflective in their responses on the post-survey. Participants were questioned about this time change during interviews and responses are included in qualitative evaluation.

Qualitative evaluation

This analysis included an evaluation of change responses by participants, interview responses, and general observations during the professional development. As part of the qualitative analysis the researcher created a changes table and spent time examining changes to individual participants on the pre and post-survey and identified responses that were salient based on one or more individuals making noteworthy changes to their responses. Upon review of those changed responses, paired t-test results, and time change participants were asked a series of questions during the interview.

During the review of the qualitative findings the researcher considered the findings through the sociocultural perspective with the knowledge that the learning series was designed as a transformative learning experience. Vygotsky's (1978) explanation of the sociocultural perspective identifies a critical role of language in the development of knowledge and the importance of appropriate scaffolding to navigate that learning. A transformative learning experience as defined by Mezirow (1997,1998) is beyond minimal consideration or discussion as it requires an individual to engage in critical reflection which results in the restructuring of a person's self-identity or questioning of their pre-established schema. Through the consideration of these theoretical frames and an analysis of the qualitative results, five general themes emerged. These were: (a) understanding difference between social and academic language; (b) importance of inclusion; (c) need for collaboration ; (d) understanding culture; and (e) critical reflection.

Understanding difference between social and academic language. In reviewing the overall responses, one theme that emerged was related to understanding academic language, a component of ELD. There were five survey questions that the researcher identified as salient

based on noteworthy changes by certain participants compared in the pre- and post-survey response as indicated in Table 7. The question related to younger ELs was added due to the confusion about the ease by which younger students gaining language, they often exposed to English language development with their peers prior to third grade. The retention prompts were included as students are often retained confusing social proficiency with academic proficiency. It is worth noting that though the prompt 'It is easier to teach English language to younger English learners than adolescents or adults' was not statistically significant, however, eight out of nine participants (89%) changed their response on it.

Table 7

Response Changes Concerning Understanding Difference Between Social and Academic Language

Survey Prompt	Amy	Alan	Barbara	Katie	Laura	Rachel	Steve	Susan	Valerie
Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible.	agree to disagree						strongly agree to agree		agree to disagree
English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.	agree to strongly disagree		disagree to strongly disagree	disagree to strongly disagree		disagree to strongly disagree	disagree to strongly disagree		
It is easier to teach English language to younger English learners than adolescents or adults.	agree to strongly disagree		agree to disagree	disagree to agree	strongly agree to disagree	agree to disagree	agree to strongly agree	disagree to strongly disagree	disagree to strongly disagree
Retaining English learners can be effective if they are not progressing in their language proficiency.	agree to disagree		agree to strongly disagree			disagree to strongly disagree			
Retaining English learners can be effective if they are a newcomer in their language proficiency.	agree to strongly disagree		agree to strongly disagree						

Almost all participants changed their responses on the question 'It is easier to teach English language to younger English learners than adolescents or adults.' Though most participants shifted from agreement to disagreement, two participants made a shift in the other direction. On the other two survey questions related to retention of ELs due to language proficiency, a few of the participants made noteworthy shifts.

Barbara and needs of older ELs. Barbara is an immigrant and elementary ESOL teacher from a traditional education program with over 10 years of teaching experience in the United States. She shifted her responses from 'agree' to 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' on all three prompts related to development of academic language. When questioned about this shift Barbara noted:

> I think my answer changed because of what we talked about in one of the sessions. I don't have the experience with older students – with adolescents. But definitely our discussion on what student bring because they're exactly at the same level and exactly same stages as any kindergartener or 1st grader versus a kid that comes for the first time in high school for example it is the same stage they are going through. We have to teach where they are.

In this example Barbara referred to the notion that as an educator she must consider second language development, specifically by understanding that the stages of language learning progression from social to academic language are similar in both older and younger ELs. Barbara explained the shift was due to the discussion and content of the professional learning as her experience has predominantly been with younger students. This discussion and content were anchored in a mistaken belief about ELD presented in session 1 which is that younger ELs have an easier time learning English and are easier to instruct.

Amy and students with oral language. Amy is a first year elementary ESOL teacher born in the United Stated who attended a traditional teaching program and spent a year aboard in Eastern Europe teaching English. When asked which part of the series was most helpful, she first identified the discussion about academic language and the time it takes to become fully proficient. She explained:

> I took a year abroad and taught English overseas, and it's so different than coming back to America and teaching kids in English in inclusion. But I think I always get hung up on these kids have been here for so long and should know this already but I have to constantly remind myself that, no, it does take a lot of time for them to acquire that academic language piece and also on the opposite side thinking these kids are super high and don't really need my support as much as the lower ELs that come into the classroom. But that's completely false these kids need the same support just in a different way to really help the better understand the academic language they need to be successful in the classroom.

Amy shared that students who she may perceive as being fluent likely still need support with academic language. Further, she shared that the fluency is simply the development of students' social language. It was her first-year teaching ESOL in the United States. So, this idea that student can orally communicate but struggle with literacy and the idea of literacy being the ultimate goal was new to her. Her experience in Eastern Europe was with students who did not have oral proficiency.

Barbara and myths related to social versus academic language. Barbara shared a similar takeaway about what she found helpful from the series. When discussing the myths and

misconceptions section she explained one of the most helpful components was the discussion of social versus academic language:

> Probably the fact that when it says that students take two to three years to acquire a new language; that is totally false. Students may take even more because they are learning the social language. But also, they have to deal with the academic [language] and that there is where we come into play we ESOL teachers come to play. Definitely what is social language and what is academic.

Both this quote, and the earlier comments Barbara made, suggest a change in knowledge related to the progression in proficiency from social to academic language and suggests a change in a common misconception related to the time it takes to become fully proficient in English. Barbara noted that it is common to confuse an ELs ability to engage socially with academic language proficiency, resulting in inappropriate supports being provided to ELs.

Katie and scaffolding for the development of academic language. Katie is a traditionally trained secondary ESOL and general educator with over 10 years' experience. Katie was born and raised in the United States. When questioned about her shift from disagree to agree on the ease of teaching younger versus older ELs she explained:

> Some of it was what we talked about in the sessions about how proficiency really isn't expected to happen for seven years especially when it comes to academic language…I was thinking about academic language and how strongly it figured into my sheltered American government class and I started to focus more on writing for the HSA and I had to think a lot about how to help them with developing fluency in writing, getting past the vocabulary they might struggle with, so they were more comfortable with it and being able to write.

Though Katie shifted her response on the survey prompt related to younger ELs being easier to teach English to than older ELs, which was not aligned to the learning in the sessions. Her explanation was quite interesting and focused on the progression of social to academic language and the strategies for developing academic language. Katie is highlighting the time it takes for an EL to acquire academic English proficiency and the importance of scaffolding for it. The scaffolding that Katie referenced focused on helping ELs develop their writing fluency and move past the vocabulary that may impact their comprehension.

Valerie and importance of native language development. Valerie is an alternatively trained ESOL teacher with less than three years of teaching experience. Valerie was born in the United States, but she had lived abroad. When questioned about the most helpful component of the professional learning, she identified a different aspect of the Academic English development focused on the importance of simultaneously building native and English proficiency. She explains:

> In terms of most helpful really enjoyed bilingual and neuroscience professional development I think that helped me to better understand what I need to do in order to encourage my students to remain bilingual and support them with developing both their native language at home and as well as with developing English at school. I think that was probably my biggest take-away that was something I never really considered before…ESOL is so drilling English into these students brains to get them to be able to be proficient I thought that was one of the most important things I took away from the PD.

Valerie's biggest insight was based on the discussion of the importance of native language proficiency and the transferable nature of language skills from native to English. In her

comments, she highlighted that many ESOL teachers may focus on English and English development. The focus on ELD may result in educators ignoring the importance for ELs of maintaining their native language proficiency while progress in in English. This shift is not only supported by research, but also helps educators treat native language development and fluency appropriately as a strength rather than a hindrance to learning.

Summarizing understanding social and academic language. Common misconceptions or beliefs related to ELD include the length of time it takes to obtain academic fluency and the importance of native language development. Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), at its foundation, is the understanding of how language and language development drives learning. Barbara, Amy, Katie, and Valerie's responses to the interview and survey questions indicate some important changes related to these misconceptions about ELD and the supports ELs require. They reported changes in their knowledge of social versus academic language and noted the importance of native language development. They attribute this change to the professional learning. These types of changes to misconceptions could lead to critical reflection and changes in the frames of reference (Mezirow, 1997,1998). Amy described her shift in understanding related to students who had more social language fluency and her realization that they still needed support could be an indication of this type of shift in her frame of reference. Another example is Valerie's recognition that her focus on English as an ESOL teacher ignored the importance of native language development. This type of change can lead to addressing a common misconception like expecting parents of ELs to utilize English at home. Instead, she is now more likely to encourage native language usage.

Importance of inclusion. A review of the participant response changes and interviews uncovered a theme related to the importance of inclusion. Three survey questions were identified

by the researcher as salient based on notable changes by certain participants compared in the pre- and post-survey response indicated in Table 8. It is worth noting that though the prompt 'English learners require more of my time than other students require' was not statistically significant, however, seven out of nine participants (75%) changed their response on it.

Table 8

Response Changes Concerning Importance of Inclusion

Survey Prompt	Amy	Alan	Barbara	Katie	Laura	Rachel	Steve	Susan	Valerie
The inclusion of English learners in subject area classes benefits all students.			Disagree to strongly agree			agree to strongly agree	strongly agree to agree		
The inclusion of English learners in general/subject classes increases my workload.		Almost never to occasionally						almost always to occasionally	
English learners require more of my time than other students require.	Almost always to almost never		almost always to almost never	occasionally to almost never	almost never to occasionally	almost never to frequently		almost always to occasionally	frequently to occasionally

Susan and strategies to support ELs. The first two salient survey questions related to inclusion of ELs and the impact on other students and teacher workload and revealed some interesting responses. Susan is an elementary ESOL teacher with less than 3 years of experience, was born in the United States, attended a traditional teaching program and lived in Europe for a year. On the prompt about whether ELs require more time than other students, she shifted from 'almost always' to 'occasionally'. She noted in her survey open-ended response that "Subject teacher might not have time to pre-teach ELs vocab & background knowledge" and "Some subject teachers are not willing to provide scaffolds; they think it will take too much time." She additionally shared, "This PD showed me that strategies designed to help ELs really do help all

students! You can improve incrementally over time, focusing on one thing at a time (cultural responsiveness, language scaffolds, activating prior knowledge)." Though not able to participate in the interview, these responses in the post survey indicate the professional learning provided actionable strategies related to supports for ELs. These supports aligned to components of ELD, especially activating prior knowledge and scaffolding by proficiency.

Barbara and scaffolding for ELs based on their level. All but two of the participants changed their responses on the question 'English learners require more of my time than other students require.' Most participants shifted from almost always or frequently to occasionally or almost never. An example is Barbara who shifted her responses from 'almost always' to 'almost never' on the time required to support ELs. Another example for Barbara when shifted her responses from 'disagree' to 'strongly agree' on the benefit of including ELs. When questioned about these shifts as referenced earlier Barbara noted that it is critical to teach students where they are in the language development, scaffolding for their needs, but that this is not an overwhelming task for teachers and can benefit the entire class. She shared that it is beneficial to include students in general education classroom "because they are exposed to the whole curriculum" and this can be done with scaffolding.

Rachel and benefits of inclusion. Like Barbara's changed beliefs about the value of inclusion. Rachel is a first year ESOL teacher that attended a traditional education program. She noted the importance of inclusion and that educators often overlook this need, she explained:

> I think it has to go back to the myths and misconceptions I think it is very easy to slide back into the oh they can't do it or its too hard or they can't do anything at all and so it's not worth giving. But then as you realize giving them the opportunity to do it is improving their language, being exposed to it [core content] and even if they don't

> completely grasp everything, they might get one little piece of it. And I think often times we just think it is too difficult to try to explain it instead of thinking well having 1% of it is better than having no percent of it.

In this reflection, Rachel is discussed the inclusion of ELs in core content. She explains that educators may think students will not benefit from inclusion, but during the myths and misconceptions discussions in the professional learning, the importance of emersion and exposure to core content impacted her beliefs about inclusion. In pre and post open-ended responses to the survey about benefits of ELs, she explained Rachel stated, "They have access to knowledge and experiences outside of just language instruction. They can still learn something even if it is in English." In this description, Rachel is not only highlighting that ELs can benefit from inclusion, she explains that they also learn from experiences with peers that may not be available in the ESOL classes.

Summary of the importance of inclusion. Barbara, Rachel, and Susan shared changes in misconceptions and beliefs related to the importance or benefit of inclusion. Through their experiences with the professional learning, they learned about the importance of exposure to grade level content with appropriate scaffolding. This led to changes in knowledge and ultimately a change in their misconceptions related to inclusion of ELs in core content. These misconceptions could have been the result of habits of mind described by Mezirow (1997) as general tendencies or beliefs that filter an individual's experiences. Inclusion provides ELs an opportunity to engage with peers that may be more advanced. With appropriate scaffolding, learning can happen within Els' zone of proximal development in alignment with Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and the development of knowledge. One participant with a notable change is Barbara. She explained that engagement in the professional development series

impacted her dramatic change in belief regarding the benefit of inclusion. The discussions and learning about language development and scaffolding led her to realize and shift from disagree to strongly agree about the benefits of inclusion for ELs. This change could be the needed shifted frames of reference identified by Mezirow (1997, 1998) as essential adjusting beliefs and the result of a transformative learning experience.

Need for collaboration. One unexpected theme that emerged based on discussions is the demand for ESOL teachers and general educators to collaborate and engage in the professional learning series together. They noted the importance of the discussion and reflection together. There are two survey prompts related to collaboration between general and ESOL educators that are evaluated in Table 9.

Table 9

Response Changes Concerning Collaboration between Educators

Survey Prompt	Amy	Alan	Barbara	Katie	Laura	Rachel	Steve	Susan	Valerie
General/subject education teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of English learners.	disagree to strongly disagree		strongly agree to agree			agree to disagree			agree to disagree
ESOL staff and general/subject staff co-plan together.				occasionally to frequently		almost never to occasionally		almost never to occasionally	occasionally to frequently

Steve and the importance of diverse backgrounds. Steve is an immigrant and has been an ESOL teacher for over 10 years. He mentioned that one of the best aspects of the professional learning was the variety of the participants. He explained:

> The PD was like the social gathering where we came together from all, different backgrounds, and interacted amongst ourselves. I did learn from others and that was typical example of an ELL classroom where you have may have students all the way from Africa, this other student is from Mexico. We sit in the same classroom; we have to learn. I mean we have a common topic we are discussing. I am drawing from my own experience or my own prior knowledge. This other student come with that. And we actually form a community, I mean our diversity. The whole idea diversity or multicultural coming from multicultural education, that is my focus. The PD, the PD was wonderful because all of us who were there were from different backgrounds, we were teaching different classes, we were teaching at different levels.

In this example Steve explained that this learning series provided an opportunity for educators from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds were able to come together, interact, and learn. This comment was in response to what he identified as a one of the biggest benefits of this particular learning experience. He confirmed that for him, learning is social.

Rachel and a collaboration tool. When Rachel was asked about her change from agree to disagree about the time it takes for general educators, she responded with the following:

> One of the things we were talking about was a cheat sheet we were talking about doing, the brochure, I think that helps because it makes all the information we have in our brain easily accessible on one piece of paper a gen ed teacher can constantly refer back to and I think that would really help because I am not always going to be around but that paper will and I can give you that paper for when I am not around.

In this example, Rachel referred to one of the work products she created during the final session. She shared in this example that creating this sample support document for teachers working with

ELs led her to realize that with the right supports, a general educator can support ELs even when an ESOL teacher is not available. This support document provides a concrete way for ESOL and general educators to collaborate.

When asked if she would recommend this series to others, Rachel shared she would. She also shared that she would like to see a larger and more diverse group of participants. She explained:

> Oh, I would definitely recommend this literally to everyone, I think ESOL teachers can benefit from it. I think Special education teachers can benefit from it, general educators. I think it would be really great to see a bigger mix so that not only do you have the ESOL people there because again we are valuable resources, but you get more diverse conversations and see what is happening on the other side of things.

In reply to this response, Rachel was asked to describe more about the diverse conversations and mix of participants, she explained:

> I think it helps like I said being a first year teacher now I am a second year teacher learning my craft and trying to figure out where I want to be and what I want to do and how I want to do it. And still trying to find my way and get all this knowledge it is really awesome to meet all these people who have been around a while or have different experiences or have traveled the world. All this different knowledge and all these different experiences coming together in one room to share out you can get so many different ideas and different viewpoints from just one session.

In these replies Rachel identified the benefit of a variety of educators with different personal and professional backgrounds learning together. She shared that this collection of professionals discussing and sharing their perspectives was valuable. This aligns to Steve's beliefs about the

importance of conversations between diverse stakeholders. They are both highlighting that these diverse perspectives enhance the learning as it is an opportunity to not only learn the content of the series but learn from each other.

Valerie and benefits of ESOL and general educators working together. Valerie shared a similar view when reflecting on the series explained:

> If I remember right, there were a couple general educators at the professional development series, and I think that was really helpful talking with them and hearing from them about the scaffolding strategies that they use for ESOL students. And understanding that it's not, essentially its best practices to be able to scaffold for ESOL students and it's not as daunting as it may seem to some general educators. So, I think that was really helpful having general as a part of this PD and I wish there were more general educators as a part of it.

In this instance Valerie identified the benefit of having ESOL and general educators participate together in the learning about ELs. She benefited from the conversations with general educators and changed her perspective realizing that supporting ELs in general education classes is not as "daunting" as some educators may believe.

Barbara and collaboration can lead to appropriate scaffolding. Barbara shared a similar take-away, identifying the importance of general educators working with ELs:

> The myths and truths about ELs because definitively general education teachers find it difficult to deal with different students from different languages. They don't know what to do and basically, they have many misconceptions on what a student's do they think that because they are in the classroom, they are supposed to do exactly what other

> students do. However, when we explain to them how each student is different from one another they are more patient.

Here Barbara described that some general educators hold misconceptions about the uniformity of students. ELs have unique needs and may requiring scaffolding to access learning. Through collaboration with ESOL teachers, general educators are able to identify and support the ELs in their classroom. This allows general educators to be more understanding of the ELs and their needs.

Summary of the need for collaboration. The professional development series included educators with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. Steve, Rachel, and Valerie identified the benefit of this varied group of educators learning together and the advantage of different perspectives to facilitate dialogue and learning. Critical reflection (Mezirow, 1997, 1998) identifies the importance of reflecting on your own frame of reference. This diverse group of educators were able to engage together sharing their experiences. These shared experiences were aligned to their individual frames of reference, the collaboration and conversations between each other was critical to each individual recognizing other perspectives and ultimately shifting their own perspective. Barbara noted an important application of the collaboration, realizing that through partnership she was able to identify the appropriate scaffolds for ELs. This collaboration led to better instruction within the student's zone of proximal development that is aligned to Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978).

Understanding culture. An additional theme that emerged through a review of the notes from sessions was that participants valued understanding the cultural experiences and background of ELs. The educators identified various examples of leveraging and understanding a

student's cultural background. Additionally, there are two survey prompts related to understanding cultural evaluated in Table 10.

Table 10

Response Changes Concerning Understanding Culture

Survey Prompt	Amy	Alan	Barbara	Katie	Laura	Rachel	Steve	Susan	Valerie
Understanding the cultural background of an English learner is essential for their success.	agree to strongly agree			agree to strongly agree				agree to strongly agree	
I think its important to consider English learners cultural background when preparing lessons and assessments.			disagree to strongly agree			agree to strongly agree			

Session 3 discussion about culturally relevant pedagogy. An evaluation of the session three notes revealed during the session 3 discussion of the culturally relevant pedagogy, participants shared experienced that led them to better understand the culture of their students. Laura, a bilingual general educator with over 10 years of teaching experience, highlighted the importance of visiting families of Els and related it to an experience with a previous high performing student. Laura stated she "Previously visited a family living in the basement in DC. She was one of my top students." She explained the visit gave her more empathy for the student and family, and the challenges the student had to overcome to be successful.

Valerie acknowledged two particular teacher actions that she identified as cultural bias that she had seen her ELs experience with the teachers in her school. The first is "discouraging students from using L1." She explained "I've noticed a lot, teachers will compare their ELs to students with IEPs, in thinking that being an EL is detrimental to student. Obviously, they have

challenges, but they can be gifted or on grade level." In this example, Valerie is recognizing a common belief that ELs should not be utilizing their native language, which is in direct contradiction to ELD. Additionally, she identified a misunderstanding educators might hold about ELs; confusing them with learners with disabilities. Valerie noted that teachers see ELs' lack of English proficiency as a disability rather than the benefit of these students and precursor to becoming bilingual or multilingual.

Amy shared a story about visiting a middle eastern refugee family and learning about their journey to the United States, during her description of the experience, she described a common misconception about ELs and how she addresses as an ESOL teacher. She shared:

> I had opportunity to go have dinner with one of my students. It was an awesome experience, I got to meet her mom and her dad. Learn about them escaping the war in Syria, it was really eye opening. My aunt donated a ton of girls' clothing to this family. It really helped me understand why I do what I do. I work with a couple of teachers who just don't get it. They don't know what students have gone through, or their abilities, or call on them when they are nonverbal or in silent period. I don't understand. And they ask me to translate for them. And I say no that's not my job. I am going to support them and help teachers find/use resources.

Amy is identifying an important concept in this quote that understanding a student's family and their needs is critical to truly understanding that student and their experience. This aligns to Laura's experience in DC visiting one of her top students in a basement apartment.

Valerie made an observation about the types of teacher she felt was most likely to struggle most with understanding a student's culture. She shared "I've noticed that the teachers who are the least culturally aware are the ones who have been in their roles the longest and

haven't had experience with ELs." Valerie in this example is identifying specific characteristics of educators that are most likely to struggle with understanding the cultural background of their students. Those are educators who have been teaching for years with little experience working with ELs.

Summary of culture. During session 3 participants engaged in an extensive discussion about culture. Laura and Amy recognized how visiting families at their home helped them understand the experience and needs of their students. Valerie identified educators that she felt did not value learning and understanding a student's culture. According to Mezirow (1997;1998) a frame of reference is developed based on a person's experiences. Visiting your student's home and understanding their daily lives is critical for educators especially for those that do not shared or similar experience. This consideration of a student's experience can impact an educator's frame of reference, potentially leading to critical reflection. This coupled with discussions in session 3 provided opportunities for the participants to reflect on how they understand and support a student's cultural background.

Critical Reflection. An evaluation of the survey and interview results indicate that participation in the professional learning series led to critical reflection for some participants on their beliefs and misconceptions. One survey prompt related to this is in Table 11, identifying whether the participant recognizes their 'own biases and prejudices'. All but one participant responded in the post-survey as almost always or frequently. Four the participants adjusted their responses to this prompt resulting in frequently. Two participants, Alan and Steve, shifted from occasionally to frequently. Another two participants, Barbara and Laura, shifted from almost always to frequently. Though a decrease in frequency potentially was a more realistic account of their considerations. Additionally, when participants were questioned about the change in

response time between the pre- and post-survey, Rachel and Valerie had substantive changes in time on pre and post provided insight shared their reason for increased time per question on the post survey was result of the reflections on the insights gained from the professional development.

Table 11

Response Changes Concerning Reflection

Survey Prompt	Amy	Alan	Barbara	Katie	Laura	Rachel	Steve	Susan	Valerie
I recognize my own biases and prejudices.		occasionally to frequently	almost always to frequently		almost always to frequently		occasionally to frequently		

Steve and collaboration and reflection leading to appropriate scaffolding. Steve explained when asked about the change in his response about recognizing his own biases and prejudices:

> What I noticed when I started instructing as a teacher as an ESOL teacher I use recognize my own biases occasionally but in the profession as I attended PDs I interact with other teachers when it comes to planning I sat down and planned with other teachers I noticed that for every effective planning to go on when you have to instruct ELLs. You need to have an idea about your own bias and that is as why as an immigrant or I will say an EL teacher it is also about the students it is my duty in the classroom. My accent may problem to understand me but it is my duty in the classroom to repeat to say something as many times as possible demonstrating, illustrating, draw on the board to enable understanding. So, I was looking at when I start instructing to the current moment I would say currently, frequently every time I am doing planning I must recognize I must have my own bias in mind.

In this case, Steve described that the interactions with participants and their discussions of scaffolding led him to consider bias and keep it in mind when planning. He shared that the professional development helped him consider his bias. Through the collaboration with colleagues during the professional learning, and shared perspectives, Steve, like Barbara earlier was able to appropriate scaffolds for ELs. When specifically questioned about how the collaboration occurring during the series impacted identifying appropriate scaffold, Steve explained:

> Especially when we had interactions, we had to talk conversations amongst ourselves we had to talk. Ahh I will not remember the name of the lady I sat with, but this was something we discussed during the PD we talked about when we do planning what do we usually at them. Do we really take time to think about our own bias or do we go ahead and plan having it in mind that the students will understand what we are doing? That is why we discussed about the idea of when you plan, when you prepare an assessment, even try to answer those questions yourself, find out how much time you have used in answering those questions then think about the students. So, if I take 30 minutes to answer five questions and I have the students to answer these same questions in 30 minutes, I don't think it's appropriate because I am an adult and these are young minds that are growing. IF I use 30 minutes, I should give them 40-50 minutes to answer those same questions. So the PD was very helpful because of the interactions I got with other teachers with this handful of very good interventions and strategies.

In these examples, Steve illustrated how his interactions with peers in the professional learning series and discussions lead him to reflect on how he supports ELs. He explained that now he considers the language demands of his lessons. It was through his interactions with his peers that

he began to reflect on his practices. Steve's background was as a secondary foreign language teacher at the high school and college level, so this understanding of the pedagogical needs of younger ELs was a substantial shift for him. This shift was driven by critical reflection as his educational and work experience had not prepared him for the required for younger.

Understanding the time changes in post survey. A review of the average time per question on the pre-survey versus the post-survey led the researcher to ask participants a question related to this change during the interview. Participants noted a number of reasons the post-test took longer. For example, Rachel took 3 seconds longer, which is 50% longer, per question on the post survey. When asked about this time difference, she noted:

> I think it was a lot to sit and reflect on not only what we thought before but what we learned and how that might have influenced where we were not to mention what was going on outside the classroom. I said I had changed my co-teaching, my co-teacher, mid-year so that was influencing how my life was going. So to see the changes happen in real life because I have a more open co-teacher wow all the things to talk about their real look at them. And you have to sit there and think about each answer and think what do I believe now and is it the same as what I believed before?"

Rachel explained in this example that during the post survey she reflected on what she learned during the session and on a change in her professional setting. She clarified that during the series she was assigned to a new co-teacher that was much more open to collaboration than her previous co-teacher. This insight, along with the learning in the series, led to greater critical reflection during the post survey.

Valerie, who spent 9 seconds longer, which is over twice as long, on each question during the post survey, was also asked about her change in time. She explained:

> In my opinion the presurvey doesn't really take a ton of critical reflection because you know your experience. I was filling out my presurvey was based entirely on prior context about what I knew about my classroom. Whereas when doing the post survey I was a little bit more careful in thinking about how might this change, how might my opinions on this change as a result of the PD, and made me think a little bit more critically about the answers rather than what my instinctual 'teachers should not modify assessments for English language learners' of course that is not true they should always modify. But I might have taken more time to think that through rather than on the pre-survey just fill out what I know. The PD caused me to think more critically about the ways that I support ESOL students and my opinions on that.

Valerie clarified that when she took the pre-survey, she was simply sharing her beliefs. During the post-survey, however, she reflected 'more critically' on her responses based on her learning. She explains that the professional learning series led her to reflect more deeply on how she supports ELs and her beliefs about that support.

Summary of critical reflection. Steve, Rachel and Valerie explained that the professional learning series led to critical reflection on how they scaffold and support ELs. Mezirow (1997;1998) identifies the importance of critical reflection and adjustments in frames of reference to experience a transformative learning experience. Steve identified that his gained a deeper understanding about supports for ELs; this was the result of the collaboration during the professional learning and reflection on his bias. Rachel explained that the combination of being paired with a more collaborative co-teacher and the learning from the series that led her to be more reflective about how she operates as an educator. Valerie acknowledged that participation in the series led to her "reflect more deeply on how she supports ELs and her beliefs about that

support." These participants recognized changes in their practice based on the learning, interactions in the series, and the critical reflection that was elicited by the learning and interactions.

RQ1: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators?

The examination of research question one was a two-part mixed methods evaluation with a quantitative analysis followed by a qualitative investigation. The paired t-test results indicated a positive impact of the professional learning series on the participants knowledge. The quantitative evaluation showed statistically significant responses for one specific question connected to ELD and three questions related to supports for ELs. Additionally, one question regarding supports for ELs approached significance. These findings indicate a positive gain in knowledge related to ELD and the supports for ELs. An analysis of the time it took to complete the pre and post-survey showed participants took 5 seconds longer per question on the post survey.

The qualitative evaluation revealed participant changes related to knowledge as a result of the professional learning. Specifically, the changes were related to their understanding of academic versus social language, the importance of inclusion, and importance of collaboration. Barbara, Katie, and Valerie mentioned that their knowledge shifted related to the development of academic English proficiency. Barbara shared insights related to the academic development of older ELs. Katie disclosed that participation helped her understand the importance of scaffolding to support development of academic proficiency. Valerie identified insights about how developing proficiency in an EL's native language can benefit their English language development. Additionally, Susan, Barbara, and Rachel all identified the benefit of inclusion for

the language development of an EL. Steve, Rachel, Valerie, and Barbara identified that through their collaboration during the learning series, they gained additional insight on how to support ELs.

Taken together, the participants' experiences in the professional learning led them to improve their knowledge of the appropriate scaffolds for ELs to engage in grade level content. The changes indicated by these participants during the qualitative evaluation, align to the quantitative findings that indicate greater understanding of ELD and the support for ELs. Sociocultural theory identifies a zone of proximal development in which an individual can learn with the appropriate scaffolds (Vygotsky, 1978). Better teacher understanding of ELD for ELs and increased knowledge of scaffolds necessary to acquire language is critical to ensuring that ELs are being instructed within their zone of proximal development. Based on this theory, this increased teacher understanding will better ensure learning for EL students.

RQ1A: How was this change in knowledge moderated by a participant's background? Given the small sample size it was difficult to distinguish the influence of a participant's background in the quantitative analysis. During the qualitative analysis, however, some participants referenced their backgrounds and experiences. Amy, Susan, Valerie, and Rachel have been educators for less than three years. They all mentioned that this professional development series was an opportunity for them to improve their practice. Steve shared his experience as an immigrant may positively impact his encounters with ELs. It is worth noting that the participants that were immigrants or bilingual did not have any particularly substantial understandings of the EL experience. The only significant theme in the qualitative results was that those with less than three years of experience noted the desire to participate in professional

learning to improve their practice, other background components could not be substantiated with triangulation of data.

RQ2: What was the impact of the professional development series as it relates to misconceptions of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and general educators?

The examination of research question two was an explanatory mixed methods study, with a quantitative analysis followed by a qualitative phase. Based on the results of the quantitative findings explanations provided in the qualitative investigation, there was a decrease in misconceptions after participation in the professional learning series. The quantitative evaluation showed statistically significant responses for two prompts and approaching significance for one prompt identifying common misconceptions related to ELD and supports provided to ELs. The participants showed decreases in their misconceptions about ELD and supports for ELs. The time per question analysis indicated on average participants took 5 seconds longer per question.

The qualitative valuation indicated participant decreased misconceptions as a result of the professional learning specifically related to their understanding of academic versus social language, understanding culture, and most pointedly the impact on reflective thinking. Barbara, Amy, Katie, and Valerie identified misconceptions related to ELD and supports for ELs. One common misconception is that parent of ELs should practice English with them at home, Valerie noted that her learning related to this misconception led to change in her approach. She now encourages native language development with her students and realizes that it benefits their ELD. Amy shared learning related to a common misconception that if a student can converse orally in English, they also have academic fluency. Realizing this misconception, and the time it takes to learn English, helped her adjust her supports for ELs. In session 3, participants identified that learning more about their students and their cultural background helped them better

understand their students, rather than relying on their beliefs or conceptions about the students. Steve, Valerie, and Rachel indicated that participation in the professional development led them to reflect on their beliefs and adjust how adjust how they support ELs.

The participants' experiences in the professional learning led them to decrease their misconceptions related to ELD and appropriate supports for ELs. The changes indicated by these participants during the qualitative evaluation, align to the quantitative findings that indicate decreased misconceptions related to ELD and the support for ELs. Mezirow (1997;1998) identifies critical refection as a profound experience that allows an individual to question their current frame of reference and adjust. An educator reflecting on their misconceptions related to ELD and adjusting supports and practices when educating ELs could potentially be an example of a changed frame of reference.

RQ2A: How was this change in misconceptions moderated by a participant's background? The sample size was too small to find any notable findings related to an educator's background. However, in the previous section Amy explained that her experience teaching English abroad impacted her expectations of fluency for ELs in an English-speaking environment. Amy stated, "I took a year abroad and taught English overseas, and it's so different than coming back to America and teaching kids in English in inclusion." The longer quote of Amy's conversation related to this particular realization is earlier in this chapter. She is explaining that through the training, she realized that her beliefs about an ELs ability and needs was based on her prior experience in Eastern Europe teaching English. She assumed when the student is able to converse in English, they did not need much support. It is worth mentioning that the participants that were immigrants or bilingual did not have any particularly substantial understandings of the EL experience.

Process Evaluation

The process evaluation entailed a mixed methods evaluation of the participant feedback, attendance, and delivery indicators reviewed by research question. Though the sample size was small, participants were engaged in the series, attended regularly, and the series was delivered as intended.

RQ3: Were the ESOL and general Educators satisfied and engaged in all four sessions of the professional development series?

One of the interview questions was related to whether or not participants would recommend this series to others, and, if they would who they would recommend participate. All seven participants said they would definitely recommend the professional development series to other educators. Amy, Barbara, Steve, and Valerie explicitly stated they would recommend general educators participate in the future. ESOL educators were mentioned by Amy, Barbara, Rachel, and Valerie as an audience for the series. Barbara and Rachel thought Special educators could benefit from the series. Administrators were suggested by Rachel and Katie, an interesting suggestion. Steve advocated for politicians to participate in the series, an interesting suggestion not mentioned by other participants.

All participants were actively engaged during the professional learning series, reading articles, reviewing media, and producing artifacts like posters and scaffold forms. They participated in whole and small group discussion. They asked each other questions, shared their experiences, and presented their products to their peers. This was recorded by the observer and the researcher that facilitated the professional learning.

RQ4: How many of the ESOL and general educators attended each of the four sessions of the professional development series?

The professional development series was open to all educators and shared through the professional development platform, directly to ESOL educators encouraging them to share this opportunity with other staff, through other district based staff to share with educators in schools, and directly with school administrators. The sessions were open to all educators, the participants included 2 general educators and 7 ESOL educators. The researcher led weekly sessions for four weeks. Twenty-four participants registered for the professional development series, but only 9 attended the first two sessions. The third session had 7 participants, Alan and Steve had other obligations that evening, but were given the materials and agreed to review. The fourth session also had 7 participants, Laura and Steve had other obligations that evening, but again both were given the materials and agreed to review. They also both completed the post survey within 24 hours of the fourth session.

RQ4A: How was the attendance moderated by a participant's background? Given the small sample size it was difficult to distinguish an impact of a participant's background. It is worth noting that 7 ESOL teachers took advantage of the series, compared to 2 general educators. In evaluating the twenty-four educators that signed up originally for the professional learning series, thirteen were ESOL teachers. As previously stated, the sample size is so small that conclusive findings are not possible whether ESOL impacts participation.

It is also worth noting that the participants had a variety of backgrounds but were dramatically different in their years of educational experience as represented in Figure 15. Group one which included two groups with either less than 3 years of experience or more than 10 years.

The four participants who had 3 or fewer years of experience had no children at home and the five participants with more than 10 years of experience had older or grown children.

Figure 15

Years of Educational Experience by Participants

Participant	Years of Educational Experience
Amy	<1
Rachel	<1
Susan	1 to 3
Valerie	1 to 3
Alan	>10
Barbara	>10
Katie	>10
Laura	>10
Steve	>10

Figure 15. This figure represents Years of Educational Experience by Participant

RQ5: Were all four sessions of the professional development series delivered as intended?

Every session had an observer that took notes on the activities, responses and delivery of the professional development. This observer reviewed the PowerPoint materials, videos, and articles prior to the session and was aware of the intended professional learning series. A review of the notes indicates all sessions went as intended except the third session. The activities in the third session lead to a lengthy discussion of culture. This discussion included each of the participants taking the time to discuss understanding culture as it relates to culturally relevant pedagogy. All the participants present during the session shared an experience related to understanding the culture of their students and families as discussed earlier. Amy, Valerie, and Laura's disclosed experiences related to understanding culture. Rachel, Amy, Barbara, and Susan shared ideas or practices related to the cultural background of a student. This discussion was beyond the allotted time for the activity, but the researcher made the decision to allow it to

continue. Session four was adjusted slightly to include one of the activities from Session three. This adjustment was explained to participants who agreed about the importance of allowing time for the additional dialogue.

RQ6: Did the current political climate impact the responses of the ESOL and general educators?

The researcher included this question in an effort to address history threat. Only one participant mentioned the political climate. Alan a veteran secondary general education teacher had changed his response in the post survey about the benefit of including ELs, explaining in the post survey that having them in his classroom forced him to be more culturally responsive with his peers. When asked what in the professional learning series impacted that change, Alan responded:

> I am going to be honest maybe not that so much as what's happening really what's happening what I know is happening in the world right now more than that. And I am going to be very honest what I have heard coming out of these politicians mouths right now about different countries, different cultures, that makes me change more because I found it insulting. That no other cultures have given anything to America. So, some of this just has to do with things I am hearing politically and just what I hear. That's where I believe it comes from. I know as a history teacher everyone has given something to America, you know from everywhere from every culture. So, you know when I hear something implying another culture hasn't given anything hasn't provided any benefit, I just have a major problem with it. Because that is not what I teach, and not what I know.

In this response, Alan stated that it was the politicians and their comments that made him consider more deeply his beliefs about the benefits of culturally diverse learners. He felt strongly

as a history teacher that he wanted his students to see the benefits of other cultures and how they contribute to making the United States a better place. This was the only mention of politicians impacting a change in belief by participant. The only other mention of a politician was Steve, who thought politicians would benefit from this professional learning, because they are responsible for making policy decisions and understanding misconceptions and bias is important to ensuring they make good decisions.

Discussion

In this discussion this study and its findings will be contextualized in the literature. This section will begin with a review of the professional development design, which will be followed up by a detailed review of the findings. Next will be an examination of the limitations of the study, followed by an analysis of the implications of this study on research and practice.

Designed as a Transformative Learning Experience

This four-part professional learning series was guided by the sociocultural perspective and designed as a transformative learning experience for both ESOL and general educators. This series was designed to increase an educator's knowledge and decrease misconceptions related to ELD and the associated supports for ELs. The researcher chose to focus on this aspect of learning based on the needs assessment conducted in the district which may reflect a finding from the research literature in that educators that are culturally and linguistically diverse from their students might have limited expectations about student potential and inaccurate beliefs about language acquisition (Reeves, 2006; Riley, 2015; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). ESOL and general educators from the district voluntary signed up to participate in this collaborative learning experience.

Researchers (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Hos, 2016) believe it is critical to provide support to educators through professional development designed to improve instruction and strategies for teaching with ELs. However, this type of approach may not change beliefs of the participants. Mezirow (1997; 1998) identifies a transformative learning experience as an event that results in a level of critical reflection that causes an individual to question their pre-established schema. He classifies this pre-established schema, or collection of pre-conceived notions and expectancies, as a frame of reference. This perspective informs a person's interpretation of experiences and knowledge development; this bias or inclination is referred to as a habit of mind. To alter a frame of reference and impact the habit of mind, an individual must engage in critical self-reflection. Mezirow (1997;1998) identifies a transformative learning experience as an event that results in a change in frame of reference.

Researchers (Inozu, 2011; Riley, 2015) propose that actively engaging educators in a way that facilitates self-reflection about their bias or misconceptions, it can impact their pre-established beliefs about ELD. Two well-known professional development programs, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and Content and Language Integration as a Means of Bridging Success (CLIMBS®), are designed to support educators working with ELs (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). A microenthnography of an established professional learning series referred to CLIMBS® analyzed discourse between the participants and facilitators; the findings indicate that professional development only focused on instructional strategies could result in a focus on the limitations rather than potential of ELs. Though discourse can be constructive, if it does not go beyond simple deliberation and may not cause critical reflection. As a result, this particular series

was designed to directly address misconceptions about the abilities and supports for ELs as it relates to their language development.

An additional component was added to this series was the inclusion of professional learning about neuroeducation and bilingual cognition. This was based on studies of the BTT, a framework designed to support educator aligned to research on cognitive development (Hardiman, 2012; JohnBull, Hardiman, & Rinne, 2013). Though BTT was not designed to specifically address the impact of second language acquisition or changes to the bilingual brain, the findings indicating embedding knowledge of cognitive development can impact efficacy of educators as relates to their students. This series included specific research about the cognitive benefits of bilingualism including improvements to executive function for bilingual individuals (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008). By addressing bilingual cognition and including learning on misconceptions about ELD and instructional strategies designed to support ELs, educators may experience a transformative learning experience. This unique combination led to the design of the in-person two-hour sessions organized into the following topics: (a) misconceptions about ELD and ELs; (b) science of ESOL; (c) pedagogy and strategies, and (d) reflection and practice.

This intervention was chosen to address a problem of practice related to the performance of ELs compared to their peers, which could result from the beliefs and expectations educators hold about ELs and the impact on instruction. This was substantiated by the results of the needs assessment, identifying that ESOL and general educators had misconceptions about ELD and the potential of ELs. This problem is situated specifically in instructional core, consisting of the interaction between the student, teacher, and task. The instructional core is identified as the center of the PELP Coherence Framework, a structure that provides a comprehensive system to

approach systemic change and decision making for district leadership in an urban district (Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & King, 2007). Due to this problem being situated in a Mid-Atlantic urban district an adapted PELP Coherence Framework was identified as a theoretical framework to determine the impact of underlying causes and factors affecting instruction of ELs. This adaptation was developed to focus on the instructional core with the student being an EL, centered on the engagement and language development of that population in this district. Precisely, the impact on an educator's expertise in supporting ELs engagement and access to appropriately challenging content through inclusionary. In alignment with the components of the adapted PELP Coherence Framework there are several underlying causes and factors impacting the instruction of ELs. Some of these factors impact the environment of the educational system. The remaining framework elements identified are part of the educational system, organized as culture, language, stakeholders, educators, and practices impacting ELs. The professional learning series was designed to address the results of the needs assessment, educators, including ESOL teachers, have preconceived notions and beliefs about English Language Development (ELD) that directly contradict the research on language acquisition and as clarified the instructional core.

Contextualizing Findings

The three main findings of this study are that participants experienced changes in their knowledge and misconceptions, participants were more reflective about their beliefs after participation in the series, and participants felt the collaborative, diverse nature of study contributed to the effectiveness.

Changed Knowledge and Beliefs

Participants in the study showed significant positive changes in beliefs and knowledge about language acquisition, two of the most significant related to the time it takes to become fully proficient and the importance of native language development. The importance of this for educators working with ELs is the impact on how they support their students. Survey results indicated a significant change decreasing the participants that believe ELs become proficient in two years. During the interview, Amy noted the learning from the series helped her understand that students she had with oral proficiency or social language in English, still need targeted support to become academically proficient. Students will often gain oral proficiency or social language in two years, but it can take an additional three to five years to gain academic proficiency (Cummins, 1979, 2011). As an educator it is critical to understand the differentiated support a student needs to ensure progression toward academic proficiency. Confusing social language proficiency with academic language proficiency could result in a student not receiving the support necessary for them to be successful in the classroom and progress in their language development.

Another significant change was related to the belief that parents of ELs should utilize English as much as possible in their homes. The concerns with this practice are that it results in exposing students to English phrases and dialect from someone who may not be proficient, de-values their native language, and impacts the bilingual development of the learner in a way that is not pedagogical sound (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981; DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007; Wessels, 2014). It is best for an EL to develop their native language while simultaneously developing English. Valerie noted that after the professional learning she realized that she should be encouraging her students to progress in their native language while she is providing ELD.

Encouraging and supporting native language development is critical for educators working with ELs, not only does it benefit their development of English, it ensures they are becomining bilingual or multilingual and provides their families an important role in their students progression.

Deeper Critical Reflection on Their Beliefs

Some of the participants noted that the professional learning resulted in them being more reflective about their beliefs. Based on the needs assessment and similar findings in research (Reeves, 2006; Youngs & Youngs, 2001) educators have beliefs about ELs that may be focused on inaccuracy related to ELD and limitations of ELs. Some common beliefs educators hold about ELs are related to benefits of inclusion and appropriate supports for ELs. Barbara and Rachel commented about the learning from the series and its impact on how they collaborate with general educators and support ELs. Barbara identified a common misconception related to the age of an EL and the impact the learning from the series had on this, specifically that older ELs do not necessarily have more difficulty acquiring English. She also identifies her learning and changed beliefs related to the benefits of inclusion, that with the appropriate scaffolds for ELs and collaboration between educators ELs can be successful in an inclusive environment. All participants during session three discussed the importance of understanding a students' culture and daily experiences. Appreciating a students' background, providing the appropriate scaffolds, and ensuring inclusion results in ELs being appropriately supported while simultaneously being exposed to appropriate grade level content.

Collaboration and Diverse Participants Supports Reflection and Learning

The needs assessment, a diversion from the previous literature, indicated ESOL teachers have some of the same misconceptions as general educators. This resulted in the recruitment of

both ESOL and general educators for the professional learning series. Participants, including Rachel, Steve, Valerie, and Barbara, indicated the benefits of learning and collaborating together. They identify that the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives led to improved reflection. This is important because administrators and supporters may be inclined to create professional learning communities of educators with common experience or job expectations. However, the participants noted that the collaborative nature of the professional learning series and the in-depth discussions about their belief and perspectives led to improved learning.

Conclusion

The professional learning series was evaluated utilizing a mixed methods explanatory evaluation, which entails a quantitative analysis followed by a qualitative investigation. There were three prevalent findings. These results were: (1) participants had specific changes related to increased knowledge about social versus academic language and importance of native language development; (2) participants reflected more on their misconceptions about ELD after participation in professional learning series; and (3) participants indicated that having ESOL and general educators with varied backgrounds interacting and conversing together helped enhance learning. These three findings were the most noteworthy from the results of the study.

The first finding related was that participants had increased knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs. Specifically, their understanding of second language acquisition related to the time it takes to be fully proficient in English and their knowledge of the importance of native language development in second language acquisition. The quantitative results indicated statistically significant changes for the responses related to ‘ELs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools’; resulting in participants changing their responses toward disagree with this statement. This was substantiated in the qualitative findings.

This change aligns to the research by Cummins (1979; 2011) that to gain full proficiecy a learner must progress from social to academic langague proficient which likely takes between five to seven years. Another is the misconception 'Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible'; the quantitative followed by qualitative findings indicated that participants changed their beliefs disagreeing with this statement. This aligns to the research that discouraging native language development has a detrimental impact on student progress and that educators should instead encourage native language usage at home (Collier & Auerbach, 2011; Cummins, 1981).

The second finding was participants were more reflective and aware of their misconceptions after participation in the professional learning series. An evaluation of time per question indicated participants spent 5 seconds longer per question on post versus pre-survey. In the qualitative inquiry, participants noted that on the post-survey they were more aware of the beliefs and how that aligned to the learning in the series. These were in the area of ELD, as previously noted, and related to the benefits of inclusion. As a result of their experiences in the series they better understood the importance of exposure to grade level content with appropriate scaffolding. These changes were aligned to educators recognizing misconceptions and adjust supports as a result. Specifically, understanding that exposing students to grade level content with the appropriate scaffolds will ensure ELs are learning with their peers.

The third finding worth noting is that participants felt the collaborative and diverse population participating in the professional learning series and the in-depth discussions about their belief and perspectives led to improved learning. This aligns to quantitative findings around prompts concerning the time general educators have to support ELs and the collaboration between ESOL and general educators. In the quantitative inquiry, participants explicitly

identified the benefits of diverse participants learning together and how that can lead to identifying better supports for ELs and more reflection for them as educators and individuals.

Limitations of the Study

The professional development series was conducted by the researcher and had nine participants, 7 ESOL teachers and 2 general educators; although twenty-four educators originally signed up for the series. It was offered afterschool weekly over four weeks in January/February 2019. Participants completed a survey during the 1st and 4th sessions. The interviews were conducted about nine months in October 2019 after the series. The study had a few limitations related to the small size, survey tool, and time frame.

The first limitation was the small sample size. The researcher was identified a larger target participant population and was hoping for more participants, and though twenty-four registered only 9 attended the first session. However, all the participants were highly involved in the sessions and most attended every session. Seven of the 9 participants chose to participate in the interview process, and each interview was approximately thirty minutes. The researcher had an opportunity to interview the majority of the participants on why they participated in the learning series, changes between their pre and post-survey, and their experience during and following the survey. This resulted in a mixed methods examination, with a stronger qualitative component and deep understanding of the individual participants and their experiences.

The second limitation was the length of the professional learning series, which included only four two-hour sessions. There are some professional learning series that are longer, SIOP requires four to eight full day sessions and CLIMBS® require three fully day sessions (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2014). This series was shorter and over one month and required participation outside

of the school day. Nevertheless, the benefit of this was it did not require them to miss any time away from school. Additionally, it allowed them the opportunity to hold sessions with a week in-between to provide time to practice or reflect on the learning. Time constraints did not allow feedback on the extent to which teachers changed their classroom practice based on the learning in the series.

The third limitation was the that the interpretation of the survey prompts may have varied by participants. For example, the prompt 'English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools' was not specific enough and therefore interpreted differently by participants. A participant may have noted that this could have only been referring to social or oral proficiency, not academic proficiency. However, that was not indicated by the participants during the interview when specifically questioned about their changes in responses. In fact, during the administration of the survey and interviews reviewing changed responses, no one mentioned confusion about the questions, instead they described how the learning, or their experiences impacted the change. Additionally, the tool was validated by Reeves (2002; 2006) and reviewed by experienced ESOL educator in this district to ascertain face validity.

The final limitation of the study was the extended time between the final survey and the interview. The interviews were about 10 months after the professional learning series ended. Yet, this length of time did allow the researcher to spend time both quantitatively and qualitatively reviewing the pre and post-survey results. The researcher was able to do the quantitative analysis by running a paired t-test and analyzing the time per question. The qualitative analysis prior to the interviews included creating a changes table by identifying interesting or noteworthy fluctuations by individual participants. This provided the researcher the

opportunity to question participants on these findings and the lasting impact of the learning from the professional development series.

Implications on Research

This research was an explanatory mixed methods study utilizing a pre and post-survey to determine changes in beliefs or misconceptions about ELs and ELD. The tool utilized primarily consisted of questions from a survey developed, conducted, and validated by Reeves (2002; 2006) in a quantitative study of mainstream secondary teachers' beliefs about the inclusion of ELs. However, the needs assessment which utilized the same tool suggested ESOL teachers had the same misconceptions as general educators, so the researcher chose to expand the invitation of the professional learning series to include ESOL and general educators. The findings of this study are promising, but future research can be conducted to further investigate and confirm these findings.

This study was conducted in an urban Mid-Atlantic district with these 9 participants. This study could be repeated in this context with other intimate groups of ESOL and general educators. Possibly at different times of the year or in different areas of the district or online instead of in-person. Other similar surveys measuring beliefs and expectancies of educators working with ELs indicate general educators struggle with inaccuracies were conducted in different settings (Reeves, 2006; Youngs & Youngs, 2001); it could be beneficial to perform this study in other contexts. Potentially similar studies with slightly larger populations of participants could be performed utilizing the explanatory methodology in different contexts with different populations of educators, possibly in rural or suburban settings. Additionally, the qualitative component could include a small ethnographic study either of one teacher that studies that teacher and their students similar to a study conducted by McCloud (2015) or a study of the

participants during the series similar to a study conducted of CLIMBS® professional learning participants (Molle, 2013). The qualitative component could have also included classroom visits with select participants and reflections completed after each session.

Another option for future research is to expand the number of participants, conducting the research with the same design of a pre and post-survey quantitative study followed by qualitative interviews. If the population is large enough or appropriate for the study context the participants could simply take the pre and post-survey and a few open-ended survey questions following the post-survey. This larger study can be done in the same context or different context to provide a comprehensive set of results.

Implications on Practice

The preliminary findings of this study are promising that when educators are engaged in a transformative learning experience in a collaborative setting with a diverse group of educators, they may result being more reflective and change their beliefs and expectancies about ELD and supports for ELs. This professional learning series could be utilized by administrators to support changing mindsets related to ELs in their schools or districts. However, it is critical that participants are a diverse group of educators and limited in number. The interactions amongst educators and between the facilitator and participants was critical to the learning, the researcher recommends the population is between 20-25. It is common for administrators to approach professional learning aligned to best practice to ground professional learning in general education content (Jensen et al., 2016); however, based on this study it appears beneficial to consider a diverse group of educators, with varied personal and professional backgrounds. These perspectives appeared to contribute to the ensuring it was a transformative learning experience. Therefore, one important implication to practice is when offering this series or this type of series,

ensuring participants are not for example just all second-grade teachers, but considering diverse groups of educators.

As findings indicated, this series led to changes in the beliefs aligned to research on ELD and resulted educators being more reflective about their misconceptions. As an administrator designing professional learning for educators working with ELs, it would be important to consider designing learning events that both identify potential misconceptions or beliefs about ELs and are designed to engage educators in a transformative learning experience. This could be accomplished by utilizing a comprehensive survey, like the one utilized in this study, and designing a learning experience that directly addresses those misconceptions and requires educators to engage together. The survey would provide administrators the opportunity to identify potential misconceptions to address during learning and if offered as a pre and post-survey to measure the impact of the learning.

An administrator could utilize this learning series, coupled with the pre- and post-survey, to improve teacher practice. This could be done with the support of coach or EL lead that supports the teacher in the classroom, observes practice, and models lessons. During those observations, the scaffolds necessary to support students with oral proficiency should be examined closely, to ensure scaffolds necessary to progress in academic fluency are in place. The changes in the survey results can be discussed during the coaching sessions and their implications on practice. This comprehensive approach can be utilized with general educators, ESOL educators, or both. Additionally, this could be done with a small group of educators from diverse backgrounds to ensure they have opportunity to engage with each other in the learning, based on the findings related to collaborative learning.

Final Thoughts

As this country grows in the richness of diversity through our immigrant populations, educators, leaders, and policymakers need to ensure that all students have access to a high quality education. In order to grow into global citizens our English learners need an education system that recognizes their strengths and unique needs. This dissertation offers many practical insight and replicable strategies for administrators and school leaders to improve the professional learning provided for their educators. These include directly addressing common misconceptions about ELD and supports for ELs, allowing educators to converse in diverse groups, and considering adult learning and frames of reference to guide reflection. It is especially important given shifts in education to same content educators learning together, that when tackling changing mindsets, that the group learning collaboratively in educationally, personally, and professionally diverse.

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Appendices

Appendix A

page 1

*** 1. PURPOSE OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**
The purpose of this needs assessment is to determine the level of professional learning and background of educators supporting English learners. This needs assessment will be utilized to support the professional learning of educators in Mid-Atlantic urban district.

PROCEDURES:
The procedure involves completing an online survey that will take approximately 10-15 minutes. Your responses will remain confidential, and we do not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS:
-There are no anticipated risks with participating in this online survey.
-Your responses are anonymous and will not be used for evaluative purposes.
BENEFITS:
This survey is designed to inform the professional learning plan for ESOL office and a potential intervention to support instruction of English learners.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:
Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary: You choose whether to participate. If you decide not to participate, there are no penalties, and you will not lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you choose to participate in the survey, you can stop at any time, without any penalty or loss of benefits.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
Any study records that identify you will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including members of the Johns Hopkins University Homewood Institutional Review Board and officials from government agencies such as the Office for Human Research Protections. (All of these people are required to keep your identity and the identify of your child confidential.) Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. No identifiable information will be included in any reports of the research published or provided to school administration. A participant number will be assigned to all surveys. Electronic data will be stored on the PI's computer, which is password protected. Any original tapes or electronic files will be erased and paper documents shredded, ten years after collection.

Only group data will be included in publication; no individual achievement data will ever be published.

COSTS
There are no costs for the participant other than that of time.

COMPENSATION:
You will not receive any payment or other compensation for participating in this study.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:
You can ask questions about this research study at any time during the study by contacting Lara Ohanian (lohanian@bcps.k12.md.us) or ESOL Office (ESOLOffice@bcps.k12.md.us).

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or feel that you have not been treated fairly, please call the Homewood Institutional Review Board at Johns Hopkins University at (410) 516-6580.

(Select one option)

I agree and will move forward with survey.	Go to Page No. 2
I disagree and will stop the survey at this time.	Stop, you have finished the survey

page 2

2. What grade levels do you currently support? (check all that apply)

- Pre-K-2
- 3-5
- 6-8
- 9-12

3. What is your school's configuration? (If you support more than one school, check all that apply) (Select one option)

- [ ] Elementary
- [ ] Elementary/Middle
- [ ] Middle
- [ ] Middle/High
- [ ] High
- [ ] District Office
- [ ] Other (Please specify) _____

4. Approximately what percentage of your school is English learners? (Select one option)

- [ ] 0%-25%
- [ ] 26%-50%
- [ ] 51%-75%
- [ ] 76%-100%
- [ ] Not sure, but high
- [ ] Not sure, but low
- [ ] I work in district office.
- [ ] Not sure

5. Approximately what percentage of your school is students that are immigrants or from immigrant families? (Select one option)

- [ ] 0%-25%
- [ ] 26%-50%
- [ ] 51%-75%
- [ ] 76%-100%
- [ ] Not sure, but high
- [ ] Not sure, but low
- [ ] I work in district office.

Not sure	

page 3

*** 6. Are you currently in a supervisory role?** (Select one option)

No	Go to Page No. 5
Yes, but I still teach classes.	Go to Page No. 5
Yes, but I don't teach classes.	Go to Page No. 4

page 4

*** 7. What is your current role?** (Select one option)

Principal	Go to Page No. 8
Assistant Principal	Go to Page No. 8
District Staff	Go to Page No. 8
Other (Please specify) _____	Go to Page No. 5

page 5

*** 8. Are you a teacher?** (Select one option)

Yes	Go to Page No. 7
No	Go to Page No. 6

page 6

*** 9. What is your current role in a school?** (Select one option)

- ☐ Related Service Provider — Go to Page No. 8
- ☐ Guidance Counselor — Go to Page No. 8
- ☐ Para-educator or Assistant — Go to Page No. 8
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____ — Go to Page No. 8

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10. Are you currently an ESOL teacher? (Select one option)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. What subject do you currently teach? (check all that apply)

- ☐ ESOL
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ Math
- ☐ English
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Fine Arts or Elective
- ☐ I do not teach a class.
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

12. What type of certification do you have?

- ☐ Professional Eligibility Certificate (PEC)

- [ ] Standard Professional Certificate I (SPC I)
- [ ] Standard Professional Certificate II (SPC II)
- [ ] Advanced Professional Certificate (APC)
- [ ] Resident Teacher Certificate (RTC)
- [ ] Conditional Certificate (CDC)
- [ ] Unsure

13. Are you on a specific professional pathway?

- [ ] Professional
- [ ] Model
- [ ] Lead
- [ ] Unsure

page 8

14. What type of teacher preparation program did you complete? (Select one option)

- [ ] Traditional
- [ ] Alternative
- [ ] Other (Please specify) _____

15. What is your certification area? ? (check all that apply)

- [ ] Administrative
- [ ] Early Childhood (PreK-3)
- [ ] Elementary Education (1-6)
- [ ] MS Content Areas (4-9)
- [ ] General Secondary Content Areas (7-9)

- [ ] ESOL
- [ ] Special Education (birth-12)
- [ ] PreK-12 Speciality Area other than ESOL
- [ ] I don't have certification.
- [ ] Unsure
- [ ] Other (Please specify) _____

page 9

16. How many years have you been in education? (Select one option)

- [ ] Less than 1 year
- [ ] 1 to less than 3 years
- [ ] 3 to less than 5 years
- [ ] 5 to less than 7 years
- [ ] 7 to less than 10 years
- [ ] 10 years or more

17. Have you ever taken a course in Linguistics? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify) _____

18. Have you ever taken a course in cultural studies? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify) _____

19. Have you ever received training or professional development in supporting English learners? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify) _____

20. Have you ever received training or professional development in supporting students that are immigrants or from immigrant families? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify) _____

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21. What is your gender? (Select one option)

- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female
- [ ] I prefer not to identify.
- [ ] Other

22. Is English your native language? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes

23. Do you speak another language? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify language(s)) _____

24. Do you speak another language fluently? (Select one option)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes (Please specify language(s)) _____

25. Have you ever lived (for more than 2 months) in another country? (Select one option)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (Please specify where) _____

26. Have you ever lived with someone from another country? (Select one option)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (Please specify where) _____

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27. Please read each statement and place a check in the box which best describes your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
(a) The inclusion of English learners in subject area classes creates a positive educational atmosphere. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(b) The inclusion of English learners in subject area classes benefits all students. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(c) English learners should not be included in general education classes until they attain a minimum level of English proficiency. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(d) English learners should avoid using their native language while at school. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(e) Parents of English learners should utilize English as much as possible. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(f) English learners should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐

(g) Understanding the cultural background of an English learner is essential for their success. (Select one option)				
(h) General/subject education teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of English learners. (Select one option)				
(i) It is easier to teach English language to younger English learners than adolescents or adults. (Select one option)				
(j) It is a good practice to simplify coursework for English learners. (Select one option)				
(k) It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for English learners. (Select one option)				
(l) It is a good practice to allow English learners more time to complete coursework. (Select one option)				
(m) Teachers should not give English learners a failing grade if the students display effort. (Select one option)				
(n) Teachers should not modify assignments for the English learners enrolled in subject area classes. (Select one option)				
(o) The modification of coursework for English learners would be difficult to justify to other students. (Select one option)				
(p) Retaining English learners can be effective if they are not progressing in their language proficiency. (Select one option)				
(q) Retaining English learners can be effective if they are a newcomer in their language proficiency. (Select one option)				
(r) I think its important to consider English learners cultural background when preparing lessons and assessments. (Select one option)				
(s) I have adequate training to work with English learners. (Select one option)				

(t) I am interested in receiving more training in working with English learners. (Select one option)				
(u) I would welcome the inclusion of ESL students in my class. (Select one option)				
(v) I would support legislation making English the official language of the U.S. (Select one option)				

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28. Please read each statement and place a check in the box which best describes the frequency at which you apply the practices.

	Almost Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Almost Always
(a) I consciously seek to know something about the culture of each of my students. (Select one option)				
(b) I am conscious of how cultural difference affect communication and expectations various groups have for school and learning. (Select one option)				
(c) I recognize my own biases and prejudices. (Select one option)				
(d) I use parents' and students' expertise to extend my own cultural awareness. (Select one option)				
(e) I use colleagues and community members to expand my own knowledge and skills in working with diverse learners and families. (Select one option)				

*** 29. Have you ever had English learners in your class?** (Select one option)

Yes — Go to Page No. 13

☐ No — Go to Page No. 14

If Did Not Answer Then
Go to Page No. 13

page 13

30. Approximately what percentage of your class is English learners? (Select one option)

- ☐ 0%-25%
- ☐ 26%-50%
- ☐ 51%-75%
- ☐ 76%-100%
- ☐ Not sure, but high
- ☐ Not sure, but low
- ☐ I work in district office.
- ☐ Not sure

31. What type of ESOL Instructional Model have you used? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Structured English Immersion (Co-teaching, Push In, Integrated)
- ☐ Pull-out ESOL
- ☐ Sheltered English Instruction
- ☐ Dual Language & Two-Way Immersion

32. Approximately how many English learners have you had in your class throughout your teaching career? (Select one option)

- ☐ 0-10
- ☐ 11-50
- ☐ 51-100

- [ ] 100+
- [ ] Not sure, but a lot
- [ ] Not sure, but just a few
- [ ] Not sure

33. Which, if any, of the following are descriptive of your classes when English learners are enrolled? Please indicate the extent to which each of the following apply in your classes.

	Almost Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Almost Always
(a) I allow English learners more time to complete their coursework. (Select one option)				
(b) I give English learners less coursework than other students. (Select one option)				
(c) I allow an English learner to use her/his native language in my class. (Select one option)				
(d) Effort is more important to me than achievement when I grade English learners. (Select one option)				
(e) The inclusion of English learners in general/subject classes increases my workload. (Select one option)				
(f) English learners require more of my time than other students require. (Select one option)				
(g) The inclusion of English learners in general/subject classes slows the progress of the entire class. (Select one option)				
(h) I receive adequate support from school administration when English learners are enrolled in my classes. (Select one option)				

(i) I receive adequate support from the ESOL staff in my building when English learners are enrolled in my classes. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(j) I receive adequate support from the ESOL office when English learners are enrolled in my classes. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐
(k) ESOL staff and general/subject staff co-plan together. (Select one option)	☐	☐	☐	☐

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34. Please list what you consider to be the greatest benefits of including English learners in general/subject classes?

_____
_____

35. Please list what you consider to be the greatest challenges of including English learners in general/subject classes?

_____
_____

36. Is there any additional information you would like to share about supporting English learners?

_____
_____

*** Required Information**

Appendix B

Logic Model

Research Problem Statement: Many educators, that are culturally and linguistically diverse from their students, have inadequate knowledge of best practices to support ELs and limited expectations of their students.

Assumptions:

Educators have a desire to change their beliefs about ELD and the potential of ELs

Educators have a desire to improve their teacher practice

Educators want to support the success of ELs

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
			Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Staff will receive stipends, which will be $30.00 per hour plus 7.65% FICA, totaling $258.36 per participant Each session will be facilitated by the researcher and the room will require a projector, screen, and space for collaborative activities	Four two-hour in person professional development sessions through a transformative learning experience and application in current practice *Session 1*: Misconceptions about ELD and ELs *Session 2*: Science of ESOL *Session 3*: Pedagogy and Strategies *Session 4*: Reflection and Practice	Sample Population of 9 ESOL and General educators receiving eight hours of professional learning in the areas of ELD and supports for ELs Participants will have specific strategies that can be applied in classroom	Increased knowledge about ELD and supports for ELs Reduction in misconceptions about ELD and supports for ELs	Changed teacher beliefs and practices about ELD and the potential of ELs in the area of linguistic knowledge, inclusion, supports for ELs, and classroom practices that assist ELs	Improved academic performance for ELs

Appendix C

Summary Data Matrix

Research Questions	Indicator	Data Source(s)	Frequency	Data Analysis
Were the ESOL and General Educators satisfied and engaged in all four sessions of the professional development series?	Participant satisfaction and engagement with each session	Exit tickets	End of each session	Quantitative data – Evaluation of the overall satisfaction after each session Qualitative data – Review of exit tickets to determine feedback
How many of the ESOL and general educators attended each of the four sessions of the professional development series?	Attendance of ESOL and General Educators at four sessions in professional development series	Attendance sheets	Beginning of each of the four sessions	Quantitative data - Attendance after each session
	ESOL and General Educators participating in professional development series	Consent forms	Prior to the start of the professional development series	Quantitative data - Number of participants in the target population
	Methods of outreach for the target population	Facilitator correspondences and records	Prior to the start of the professional development series	Qualitative – Description of the different methods of outreach for the target population
Were all four sessions of the professional development series delivered as intended?	Delivery of four professional development of with each planned component	Observer Notes	Throughout Each of the Four Sessions	Qualitative – Review of the observer notes compared to presenter slides
Did the current political climate impact the responses of the ESOL and general educators?	Impact of political climate on ESOL and General educators' beliefs	Interview Responses of ESOL and General Educators	End of the Professional Development Series	Qualitative – Narrative analysis of interview
Did the professional development series increase knowledge of ELD and supports for ELs,	Knowledge of ELD Knowledge of instructional supports and scaffolds for ELs	Pre- and post- survey	Before and after the professional development series	Quantitative – Paired sample t-tests of survey results

Research Questions	Indicator	Data Source(s)	Frequency	Data Analysis
for ESOL and General educators?		Interview Responses of ESOL and General Educators	After the professional development series	Qualitative - Narrative analysis of interview
Did the professional development series decrease misconceptions of ELD and supports for ELs, for ESOL and General educators?	Misconceptions of ELD Misconceptions of instructional supports and scaffolds for ELs	Pre- and post- survey	Before and after the professional development series	Quantitative – Paired sample t-tests of survey results
		Interview Responses of ESOL and General Educators	After the professional development series	Qualitative - Narrative analysis of interview
How was this moderated by a participant's background?	Educator's personal background (bilingual, country)	Pre-survey	Prior to the start of the professional development series	Quantitative data – Evaluation of responses based on common personal background indicators
	Educator's professional background (years of teaching, education, teaching experience)	Pre-survey	Prior to the start of the professional development series	Quantitative data – Evaluation of responses based on common professional background indicators

Appendix D

Participant Recruitment Script

The ESOL Office is offering a professional development series '*Supporting English Learners Through Understanding Bilingual Cognition and Critical Reflection*' for all educators working with English Learners (ELs). The series will be designed to support ELs in the classroom by addressing some pedagogical knowledge of second language acquisition and identifying some common misconceptions or beliefs about ELs

The objectives of the series include the following:

- Recognizing misconceptions about second language acquisition and ELs
- Understanding bilingual cognition and neuroscience
- Implementing effective pedagogy and strategies that support ELs
- Reflecting on the application of this content in practice

This is a voluntary after-school opportunity. Participants will be asked to participate in pre-and post-surveys and a post-interview. Stipends will be provided to participants based on completion of the series.

For more information about this professional development series, please contact Lara Ohanian (lohanian@bcps.k12.md.us or 410-340-7206) or the ESOL Office (ESOLOffice@bcps.k12.md.us).

Biographical Statement

Lara Ohanian is the Director of Differentiated Learning in a Mid-Atlantic urban district. In this role, she oversees English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Gifted and Advanced Learning (GAL), and Extended Learning. This provides her the opportunity to support the continuum of learners through the development and implementation of curricula, interventions, enrichment, and assessments to meet individual students' needs and prepare them for college and career. Ms. Ohanian has served in a district administrator role since 2015. Prior to completing her doctoral studies at Johns Hopkins University, Lara graduated from SUNY Geneseo in Biology and Philosophy, received a Master's degree in Bioethics at the University of Houston, and earned an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Virginia Tech. Lara lives with her husband, small son, and two adorable dogs.